

THE HIJACKING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH



THIS WILL PREACH!!!

**A REVOLUTION WITH A RELIGIOUS
BASE IS JUST AS DEADLY.**

**THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN ISLAMIC FAR RIGHT
AND CHRISTIAN FAR RIGHT.**

**IF BOB DOLE WERE ELECTED, THE
CHRISTIAN MILITIA WOULD
ASSASSINATE HIM TO GET THEIR
MAN (THE VICE PRESIDENT) IN.**

Written by a spy who worked
his way into the deepest secrets
of the Christian coalition.

**The Hijacking of the
Christian Church
by the Religious Right**

by Brother Anonymous

Flyleaf Notes:

A few years ago, there was a movement within the Republican Party which displaced many traditional members, and replaced them with younger people. At first, those who had been displaced interpreted this as a natural cycle of events, and welcomed the dedication and energy the new members brought with them.

Gradually, however, it became obvious to those who had been 'displaced' that they had in fact been dumped, kicked out of their own Party, and that there was actually something very disturbing about the agenda of the new members, and their involvement with the Religious Right.

Thus was born the Committee of Traditional Republicans, who took it upon themselves to finance the research they felt was needed in order to understand the new forces that were taking over the GOP. Part of this research involved sending operatives undercover to learn about the powerful backstage maneuverings of the Christian Coalition. This book is written by one of those agents.

It is very likely that the Religious Right will attempt to counter the charges made in this book by means of a tactic they have used before: a showcase gathering of representatives from a cross-section of America's religious organizations and faiths, designed to mislead the public, and show that the Christian Coalition is utterly non-partisan. Anybody who reads this book will not be fooled.

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Introduction

I am a spy. An undercover agent. I have changed my identity, slipped across the battle lines, and blended into the ranks of the enemy. But no, it's not what you think. I'm not in a foreign country, and I haven't infiltrated another world power. I'm right here in the United States, and the enemy is all around us. It's called the Christian Coalition, and my story reveals how this group of dedicated Americans is trying to steal this country right out from under us.

Most people are skeptical, and I don't blame them. But I've spent months attending Christian Coalition meetings, conventions, and training sessions, wired for sound, secretly taping speeches and conversations about their plans for an orchestrated strategy that will place their people in every possible public office from the local school board all the way to the White House. They know the value of the pulpit, and they are using it as a rallying point for their cause, hijacking Christian Churches, pastors and congregations in their single-minded campaign for power.

The Christian Coalition claims to be non-partisan and non-political, stating that their only function is simply to provide information that will educate voters about candidates' positions on matters affecting a Christian agenda. In fact, the group wants the political power to control this country, and works stealthily behind the scenes to promote their own interests, actively supporting the candidates who will help them achieve their goals.

The CD that accompanies this book contains recordings that are simply astounding. They are the actual words spoken by members of the Christian Coalition - including its founder, Pat Robertson - and they vividly prove that what I'm saying is frighteningly true.

Preface

America was created by people who came from other parts of the world to live in a free society that believed in the separation of church and state. A few short years later, we are faced with the return of some of the conditions which caused our forefathers to flee their home lands in the first place.

The Religious Right, under the banner of the Christian Coalition, is determined to use any and every means possible to violate the churches that have always been the beacons of American freedom, and through them achieve the political power they so desperately crave. It's a shame; it's an outrage; it's a crime; and it's happening right under everybody's nose.

Pat Robertson founded the Christian Coalition in 1989 after he failed in his bid to become President of the United States. He reasoned that if he couldn't get to the White House as a democratically elected candidate of the American public, then he would create an organization that would open the way for him, by eliminating his opposition and electing the Conservative Religious Right Christians of his choice.

Since then, he and his family and inner circle have been working hard at making his vision come true. Robertson's tactics in several areas will be explored later in these pages, but his most outrageous strategy is the main subject of this book. The Christian Coalition is infiltrating churches throughout the country, playing on the sincerity and, in many cases, naïveté of pastors and congregations, and making them all part of Pat Robertson's political machine. But churches, generally speaking, are not political. Most pastors understand that their role is spiritual, and politics is secular. So how does Pat Robertson manage to "use" churches? That is to a large extent what this book is all about.

All over America, in large cities and small towns, the Christian Coalition has set up "stealth" training centers. These are boot camps for the troops, where Coalition members are taught how to infiltrate churches and bring them around to the new agenda of the Religious Right. Initially, efforts are concentrated on the pastor, with Coalition lieutenants attempting to convince him that in order to be relevant in today's world the church must address prevailing political realities. If this does not work, then the focus shifts to key staff members, the church board or significant supporters. The constant message is that it is the church's responsibility to provide information which can help Christian congregations make the right decisions in any elections. Eventually, a constituency is developed which will in turn put pressure on the pastor if he has resisted the Coalition's overtures thus far. The pastor is now caught in a wicked trap, and may no longer have any alternative but to capitulate.

Once the change has been accomplished and the church starts getting political, this can provoke deep divisions among its members. In a typical scenario, a national magazine quoted a former church member as saying, "I don't go to church to hear about politics and world events. I can get that in the newspaper and on TV. I go to church to hear the word of God."

When pastors complain that Christian Coalition tactics are driving members from their fold, the standard word from Virginia Beach is, "Praise God. If people are getting uncomfortable with your message and walking out, this means you must be doing something right."

The purpose of this book is to expose this strategy and show the general public what is really going on within the shadowy world of the Christian Coalition. I will divulge what I have learned in their training sessions: how to intimidate a pastor, and persuade him to come around to the Coalition's way of thinking; how to take over an entire precinct; and worst of all, how to dig up dirt on opponents and destroy them in cold blood. All in the name of Christianity.

Some of this material will show that Christian Coalition leaders believe that they are entitled to "execute God's will" on their enemies. Therefore, in the interests of security, names of certain people and places, as well as other information, have been deleted from this document. But the recordings that accompany this book are real, and speak for themselves. Those who read this book and listen to the recordings will be in a position to judge for themselves the actions and intentions of Pat Robertson and his Christian Coalition.

Chapter 1 In The Beginning

My mission was to infiltrate the Christian Coalition, to get an inside view of what they are doing, and the methods they are using to accomplish their ambitious goals. This might seem a rather strange attitude, since under normal circumstances most people could simply join the Coalition and, as a member, become fully aware of their activities. This is true, but within the group there are levels of secrecy designed to maintain confidentiality, and my assignment was to work my way through those levels in order to learn as much as possible and bring that knowledge back for the general public's information.

It must be understood that within the Coalition there exists a powerful 'them and us' mind-set. The leaders of the group believe that they are chosen by God to do his work, and that all who are not with them are against them. They further believe that they have a mandate from God to take positions of power by any means necessary. Their strategy is based on covert action at almost every level, and there is therefore a high degree of suspicion and paranoia among them.

I wanted to find every organization that had any kind of connection to the Religious Right in general and the Christian Coalition in particular. I contacted the offices of Dr. James D. Kennedy for information regarding his "Reclaiming America" conference, the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), and others who gradually steered me in the direction I was trying to go.

Along with my new identity, I had set up an address in California, since this seemed to be where most of the major Right Wing activity was taking place. Every Coalition representative I spoke with said that, "if we can get it through in California, we can get it through the entire nation." I called Marge Schrader, head of the National Office of the Christian Coalition in Virginia Beach, told her of my interest in the organization, and asked if she could give me the names of any contacts in my area. She was very friendly, and suggested I call Will Harris, the Field Director for Northern California, based in Sacramento, and Joan Foresman, who heads the Napa chapter.

Will Harris and his wife, Greta, were active in their Presbyterian Church at the time, and he explained to me how the Coalition works. If the pastor has agreed to allow the Coalition to bring their political program into his church, he will then stand aside and encourage some of the more outspoken members of his flock to take the next step. These members then approach other parishioners, and gradually sway them with their concerns about the need to be informed in order to vote in a Christian way. Once there is sufficient

support, the Coalition's Liaison will provide voter guides and other material for distribution to the entire congregation. At no time has the pastor been directly involved in this process, so there is no impression whatsoever that the church is acting improperly.

Will Harris gave me more specific details. "We may be able to get only, say, twenty four people in an area to be openly active, but think, those twenty four can influence eight hundred people in the congregation. In New York, we worked with the Catholic churches and managed to put five pro-family (this is a code-word for Robertson supporters) candidates on the school board. This represented quite a defeat to the Liberals, and in New York!" Harris seemed particularly pleased with this accomplishment. He also emphasized the need for duplicity. "The pastor and his church staff appear to stand clear . . . only preaching the message of salvation. He is not seen preaching politics. This is a scheme that is working well."

This is a perfect example of the stealth campaign being waged right now, all over America. The Religious Right doesn't really need a large army of people to accomplish its goals. It is so well organized that it can do it with only a few motivated people in each area. But the Coalition's influence is everywhere, seeping into the system, and bit by bit it is saturating the very fabric of our freedom.

"Working with churches gives us a huge advantage since we, as churches, gather every week in a non-political setting."

D.J.Gribbin, National Field Director of the Christian Coalition at a 'training school', January 13, 1994.

My next contact was with Doug Swardstrom, who is responsible for the Coalition's data base of members and voters in every area of the country. He told me there were two membership levels: the first one cost \$100 a year, and the second was a 'sustaining' membership for \$300 a year. Both of these are actually the same, but the second one is simply for people who can afford more, and therefore consider themselves upgraded to a higher category.

When I said to Doug, "Something must be done . . . and I guess if the churches don't do it, it will not be done," he responded with a statement that was a perfect example of the Coalition's attitude. He said, "The church has become the most powerful political force in America today . . . we just need to become better mobilized and coordinated, that is what we are now doing. We really appreciate your help." If people like Doug have their way, the separation of church and state will soon be a thing of the past, and we will have stepped back two hundred years in time.

In January 1994 I attended the Reclaiming America Conference in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. This event was led by Dr. James D. Kennedy, who is an active participant and strong supporter of the Christian Coalition. Many well-known personalities in the Christian movement took turns speaking to the spellbound crowd. These were the same people I would see time and again at all the Religious Right conventions I attended, hammering home their message to the faithful.

The speaker who intrigued me most was Dr. Robert Simonds, the head of Citizens for Excellence in Education (CEE). Dr. Simonds subscribes to the belief that self esteem

is a tool of the devil, a point of view that is truly extraordinary in one who is involved with education. His goal is to extend the grip of Pat Robertson's theocracy all the way into the classrooms of every school in the country. He said, "There are 2,240 school boards that have been taken over by the Christian Right. This means we own that school when our people are on the board. We can hire and fire the principals, the superintendents, and so on." 6,500 people have been elected to school boards thanks to the efforts of Dr. Simonds and the CEE. 885 churches are enrolled in his program. Citizens for Excellence in Education has 28 State Directors and 251,000 members. Dr. Simonds told me that if he can raise three and a half million dollars, he can take over every school district in America within three years, and he maintains an army of 150 special workers standing by, ready to achieve this goal.

Before moving on to my reports of training sessions and other meetings, I'd like to introduce some of the other people in the Christian Coalition.

Sara Hardman is a member of Jack Hayford's Church On The Way, as are several others within the organization. Sara was raised a Catholic, was divorced, got into New Age mysticism, then found the light. She is a powerful, extremely influential individual who knows all the key people in the Christian Right.

Pastor Scott Bauer is an associate pastor with Jack Hayford's Church On The Way, who is so convinced by the Christian Coalition's rhetoric that he actually uses Scripture to prove that the Bible has nothing to say about ministers, priests, evangelists or teachers getting involved in politics.

Guy Rogers was Pat Robertson's campaign manager during the 1988 presidential bid. In 1996 he started out as Pat Buchanan's manager, left him to work with Phil Gramm, and when Gramm pulled out of the race, Rogers formed his own firm in Virginia Beach, and still works behind the scenes for Pat Robertson. His business card states that he "Specializes in Legislative & Campaign Consulting, Event Management and Coalition Development."

Joe Farrah, the former editor of the Sacramento Union (no longer in business), now has his own alternative newspapers. He attends Coalition training sessions to instruct members on how Christians can use the media to spread their message.

Kevin Teasely is the one who introduced Proposition 174, the school voucher idea. He claims that the defeat of that bill was actually a victory, since thirty five states now have a school voucher initiative in the works.

Lorelei Kinder handles Crisis Exercises, and trains members to deal with pastors who do not want to bring politics into their church.

These, then, are some of the players in this shadow-game of Christian hardball politics. Now let's take a look at some of the things they do, and how they do them.

Chapter 2 Basic Training

This chapter is taken straight from my notes about a Christian Coalition of California Training School, held in March 1994.

These sessions are similar in almost every way to the countless sales meetings and motivational seminars being held every week in conference rooms all over the country. A roomful of trainees gets together with a group of instructors and they go to work. In the more usual situations, the instructors lecture on goal-setting and techniques for achieving those goals, and the end result is a better trained, more highly motivated sales force. In the case of the Coalition, however, the goal is to take over local churches, school boards, and other offices, and the techniques have nothing to do with the traits usually associated with Christianity.

Guy Rogers was our main speaker at this training session. He is comfortable in his role, and as he straddles a chair, in his red suspenders and shirtsleeves, he radiates the kind of energy that suggests he is just bursting with good news. One of his slogans is, "If you learn the rules of the game, you can win the game." Guy Rogers undoubtedly thinks he can teach his new recruits to win the game.

The main thrust of the training is to be aggressive. Whatever we do for the Coalition we are to do it in a way that sweeps aside any arguments and rolls right over any resistance. Another of Guy Rogers' messages is, "The purpose is to get what you want."

His first subject was the use of computers for effective networking, and setting up phone trees for efficient communication. A major strength of the movement is their ability to mobilize huge numbers of people at the grass roots level, and this is accomplished by an excellent system of communications which allows the organization to transmit information very rapidly from strategic centers around the country out to the furthest reaches of the network. This rapid response capability has served the Coalition well on many occasions, some of which I will refer to later on.

Another specialty of the Religious Right is their skill at manipulating radio call-in shows and TV programs. The technique is simple, but it requires the concerted effort of a well-organized group working together. It consists of flooding the station with calls and tying up the phone lines so that only one point of view is heard. Guy Rogers says, "One call could get lost or put off, but with so many on the line, someone must get through and be put on the air." When we stop and think that large numbers of people nationwide, who think of themselves as Christians, are actually being trained and organized to accomplish this kind of censorship, we begin to get some idea of what we are up against.

Guy Rogers again: "Bombard opponents. Pain, everyone understands . . . it's a universal language . . . pain gets them when all else fails. Tying up their phone lines and fax wires brings pain, having a boycott of businesses, hitting them in their pocketbooks, this is pain, and it works." Yes, it works, but for whom?

The Coalition is scornful of the media in general. The movement views most purveyors of information as entirely too democratic and, as such, completely incompatible with their covert methods. They are, however, extremely sensitive to any kind of adverse publicity, and will go to great lengths to protect their public image. Guy Rogers taught us how to organize a 'Coalition For Media Accountability,' at the local and national level. He also instructed us on how to handle a situation when the press is hostile. "Organize the local pastors," he said. "Especially include a Rabbi and a Catholic priest, to come in a body for a press conference that would result in a headline such as: 'Local Clergy Takes Offense At Religious Bias.'" I assume it is unnecessary to underscore the cynical manipulation at work here. 'The purpose is to get what you want.'

Rogers lectured to us on the ideal way to conduct a meeting, using as an example the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International. He told us that the Christian Coalition has 900 chapters in 50 states, with a total membership of one million people. The group's goal is to create two new chapters a week, as outlined in their two-year expansion plan. This organization is fueled by a truly amazing high-octane ambition. It is regrettable that this passion is for the greater glory of a dangerous man and his single-minded minions, rather than for the benefit of mankind.

Rogers then settled into his lecture on using churches to promote the Coalition's agenda. Each church that is to be targeted is to have a Liaison, someone who is either a Coalition representative who joins the church, or an existing church member who is recruited by the Coalition. As outlined above by Will Harris, the first step is to contact the pastor and try to convince him to allow the Coalition to gain a foothold in his church. If the pastor resists, then he is to be pressured. If, for example, the pastor objects on traditional grounds, "We've never done that before," then the Coalition's Liaison is to respond with something like, "You are right, but this is today, and you must balance the tried and true with openness and change. This is the only way the church progresses and is effective in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

The Liaison will keep up the pressure on any pastor who doesn't embrace the cause, suggesting in many subtle ways that he is not a true man of God if he does not see the need for some political guidance in his ministry. At the same time, the Liaison will seek out individuals within the congregation who are sympathetic to the Coalition's philosophy, and enlist their assistance in creating a group of parishioners who actively agitate for the church to become more political. This group can now exert even more pressure on their pastor, and ultimately they can make him agree to their demands, or they can have him replaced. Either way, the path is now clear for the Coalition to have its way. They will bring in literature to be distributed to the entire congregation, they will provide information to be included in newsletters, and eventually they will arrange for political candidates to visit the church and speak at times which, in the past, were set aside exclusively for worship.

The strategy is as effective as it is simple. Most people, most ordinary Christians, see their church as the house of God, and their minds have long accepted that what they hear in church is the word of God. The Christian Coalition is subtly positioning its message and its candidates, using the same subliminal techniques that have been used in "testimonial" advertising for years. Just as an advertiser might use a celebrity to promote its product, the Christian Coalition is manipulating the churches to make it appear as though the Religious Right is endorsed by God. It certainly is ingenious. A devilishly clever scheme.

Speaking of the devil, the Coalition considers all its enemies to be his emissaries. This no doubt helps them to be utterly ruthless when it comes to attacking anybody they feel might be a threat or a challenge. Guy Rogers devotes part of his training sessions to suggested methods for researching opponents. When he says 'researching,' he actually means 'digging up dirt.' He explained how to form committees whose function is to look for any dirt, gossip, and possible scandal that can be used to permanently damage an opposing candidate or, in fact, anyone who disagrees with the Coalition's point of view. Now, obviously they are not the first organization to operate in this way. Politics has always been a dirty business. But they claim to be non-political, and furthermore they pretend to be role models for a Christian way of life.

Speaking of candidates, Sara Hardman stated at this meeting that Senator Phil Gramm, of Texas, was, "our choice for president in 1996." Senator Gramm was scheduled to give a Christian Coalition Health Care briefing in Studio City, California, March 19, at 11 a.m., at The Sportsman Lodge. He has scheduled four more of these briefings in other parts of the country. Later in the year, Senator Gramm vacillated on, "The only thing they have to hang their hats on," - the abortion issue - and the Christian Coalition dropped him.

As mentioned earlier, there is a considerable amount of paranoia within the Coalition, and actually within the Religious Right in general. At every conference, reunion, or training meeting I ever attended, the subject of spies in our midst was always brought up. Coalition leaders spoke darkly about traitors in the ranks, and everybody looked around and nodded at each other, some of them shaking their fists. I always looked around too, but I never saw any.

Joe Farrah was another speaker at this training session. He lectured on the ways in which Christians can form committees, which carry more weight than the average individual, and decide on certain subjects they feel strongly about. Earlier, Rogers had said, "Take values we believe in and transfer them into public politics. This is attention-getting." Farrah elaborated on that idea, and suggested that the committees should bypass the editors in their local newspapers and go straight to the publisher, who ultimately has more control.

Farrah went on to make some very strong statements. He said that Vincent Foster (who was reported to have committed suicide during the initial investigations into the Whitewater scandal) was actually murdered, and that Foster and Hillary Clinton had been having an affair. He provided nothing to substantiate his claim. He also stated that, "Bill Clinton will be out of office before his term expires, and we should be preparing one of our own candidates to take over."

All of those at the training session were required to fill out an attendance survey and questionnaire. Sara Hardman explained that the main office in Virginia Beach would refund five dollars to the local office for each questionnaire returned, which would be of great help to the State and local chapters, which she claimed are under-funded. This information would also - of course! - be added to the Coalition's ever-expanding data base.

The questionnaire asked for your name, home address, your wife's name . . . Does she go to school? . . . name and address of your employer . . . your occupation . . . your college degrees . . . your best skills, with choices including giving speeches, writing, art layout, organizing events, public relations . . . and several other skills.

The questionnaire then asked what you are least able to do, to be chosen from the same list of skills. You were also asked to number eight topics in order of their importance to you: Pro-life or anti-abortion, Education, Crime, New Age Religion, Homosexual and Lesbian Rights, Communism, the Economy, etc.

At the end of the questionnaire came the 'pitch', "What will you do for the Coalition?" There were several activities to choose from, each one prefaced by, "Will You": Will you organize a chapter; Serve as a church liaison; Arrange for literature-distribution tables in churches; Lead voter registration drives, and so on. It was clear that they expected a commitment from all attendees, and an agreement to pledge all to the cause.

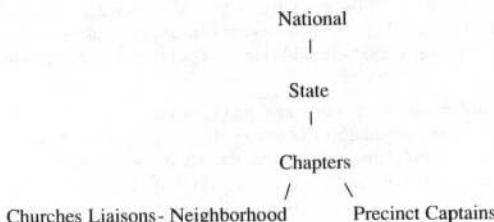
As a final note in this chapter, I will include excerpts from my records of a special Christian Coalition meeting held in California on Friday, November 11, 1994. These provide an expanded view of the Coalition's strategy for taking over churches and using them for political purposes.

This was a meeting for Officers of the Christian Coalition of Northern California. It was held in the Church on the Hill, an Assemblies of God church (room 303), at 210 Locust Street, in Vallejo, California. In attendance were 41 representatives of Northern California chapters from towns such as Modesto, Stockton, Sacramento, Fair Oaks, Napa, Antelope, and others.

Sara Hardman came up from Los Angeles, and D.J.Gribbin, the National Field Director, flew in from Virginia Beach. The purpose of this special meeting was to gloat over the Republican Conservative victories in both houses, and to work on strategies for staying in power. "We cannot become complacent," lectured Gribbin, "we must now keep the power."

The main point of the strategy was to lavish encouragement on all conservative office-holders and reinforce their efforts with letters, phone calls, and faxes to them, and to send letters endorsing them to the Editors of appropriate journals. Delegations should be formed to visit conservative legislators when they are home on a break, to tell them personally what a fine job they are doing and make them fully aware of the support they are receiving from the Christian Coalition. The goal is always to fill every office with a member of the Religious Right, and thereby have control of the government.

Gribbin illustrated the organization like this:



"We must first increase our number of Church Liaisons," he said. "This is how we take over an area. We need at least one in every church. We need to make each church aware of political issues. But don't go first to the pastor." Gribbin then quickly issued a disclaimer, saying, "Now, I'm not saying to go behind the pastor's back, but he's so busy and all, wait till later to talk with him. Go first to the leaders, the deacons and so on. Then, as you progress, give out the Pastor Packets to show that the pastors not only can legally talk about politics, but, as true Christian leaders, they are obligated to."

The Pastor Packets are documents, prepared by the Coalition, intended to help convince ministers that cooperating with the Religious Right is in no way incompatible with their spiritual responsibilities to their congregation.

Gribbin continued, "The goal is a voter registration drive in the church. This is number one. Now, the most effective way to begin identifying people in the church and in the community is to start a petition. It can be petition on anything: against government intrusion in church affairs, for example, or government funding of abortions. There are many, many issues around which a petition can be created. This gets people involved and shows you who agrees with you, especially within the church. This is important in order to build a group that can put pressure on the pastor."

"Again, this all leads up to voter registration," emphasized Gribbin. "It is also important to work on the church bulletin. The goal is to have a regular insert from the Christian Coalition. We have a fax line that sends out these inserts to be circulated to the churches. Those of you with a fax number, please give that to me. Next, you are to appoint and train neighborhood Captains to take over an area. Each one is to be in charge of a precinct."

Sara Hardman interrupted at this point, to say that a whole precinct may be more than many inexperienced people could handle, and that an assignment of that magnitude might be too overwhelming. She suggested instead allocating a four-block area to each Captain, which would still produce the desired results.

Gribbin approved her suggestion, but still insisted that the Captain must literally take over the neighborhood, and must also work the phones to prospect for new members. The phone strategy consists of pretending to conduct a survey. "However," he

cautioned, "it's better not to identify yourself over the phone as being the Christian Coalition. Invent a name, such as Citizens for a Better Government. Who could disagree with that? The survey will concentrate on questions such as, 'Do you think abortion should be legal?' Answers to questions on pro-life, education, taxes, and so on, will identify people who are sympathetic to the cause. Those who agree with you are then invited to a voter registration drive at a church, where they are given literature and, ideally, signed up as members."

Gribbin then made the following statement, "Working with churches gives us a huge advantage since we, as churches, gather every week in a non-political setting." He then said, "Just in case this is being secretly taped, I want to make a disclaimer. We are a non-partisan group, so when I say 'Republican,' I really mean Republican and Democrat. Christian Coalition is non-partisan."

In his other remarks, Gribbin said, "You should all organize a big push for school boards. This is where the power is. You should run for all public offices as well." This from the National Field Director of the Christian Coalition, which states quite categorically that it is not in any way a political organization, and enjoys a corresponding 501(c)3 tax exemption status.

Chapter 3 The Con Game

When I say that the Religious Right is stealthily stealing our country from under us, I am not exaggerating. Between 1989 and 1994 the Christian Coalition quietly took over sixty thousand churches, transforming them from houses of worship into political polling places. Though the word of God can still be heard from the pulpit, the general tone of the churches has changed. Where once there were inspirational tracts, material for spiritual growth, and answers to biblical questions, there are now 'voter guides', information about the "issues", and political candidates giving speeches and shaking hands. Pastors, who should know better, have allowed themselves to be convinced to take their ministries in the 'new direction,' spending more time in political meetings than in ministers' retreats, devoting more study to political trends than to the Gospel, giving their attention to matters that are more of the world than of the spirit. In so doing they have become less available to their congregation, and have forgotten the voice of their true calling.

Most faithful church-goers are inclined to look for the best in people and tend to be trusting souls. While these are admirable traits, they can also render these kindly people vulnerable to deception. It's no secret that con men regularly work the churches, fraudulently raising money and drawing Christians into phony investment schemes. One should never trust someone simply because they say they are a Christian, or because they use certain Christian words. And yet people do, time after time, partly because we all want to be able to believe in our fellow human beings. Televangelists are regularly exposed as cynical frauds, but because they speak "Christian-ese" their followers refuse to think logically and they keep sending them money.

Pat Robertson, Ralph Reed, who is the Executive Director of the Christian Coalition, and their lieutenants know very well how to speak and use "Christian-ese" in order to manipulate peoples' emotions. Here's what they say on the opening page of the Christian Coalition recruitment manual, "Citizen Action."

"As people of faith, we all understand the importance of persevering to victory. However, to be victorious in government, we must understand how it functions. Joseph, Moses, and Daniel, all heroes of faith who excelled in the political arena, first gained a working knowledge of the system they were entering. So with the same enthusiasm with which we approach our faith, let us exercise our God-ordained responsibility to be involved as active citizens of the government of our great nation."

The most important soldier in Pat Robertson's infantry is the Church Liaison, who is described in the training manuals as, 'the link between your Christian Coalition chapter and the churches in that area.' The manual goes on to say:

"The Church Liaison should be seen as an ambassador to the Christian Coalition from their respective church. By virtue of this position, the Church Liaison will be a key distribution point for the dissemination of critical and timely information. Voter guides, legislative alerts, talking points, leadership training information, and various other forms of information are distributed through the Church Liaisons. Moreover, the Church Liaisons are responsible for initiating voter registration efforts and issuing petition drives."

Manipulation is the stock-in-trade of the Christian Coalition: they do it often and they do it well. As an example, here is the opening paragraph of the Church Liaison training section. It uses the words of a French philosopher to prove that politics is the proper path for churches to take.

"In 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville said of America, 'It was not until I went into the churches that I understood her greatness. America is great because America is good. If America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.' Based on this description, the church, in all of its goodness, has a very basic and fundamental role in keeping our nation great. Tocqueville was correct in relating the rise and fall of America's greatness to the rise and fall of the church, therefore the church is the perfect place for us to begin a movement to restore the values of faith, family, and freedom to our government through the democratic process." (They made it look as though Alexis de Tocqueville actually said all of that in that way!) "The churches are the nexus points for tens of millions of Americans who share a conservative, pro-family philosophy. No other cultural structure represents such a vast reservoir of potential to help the pro-family movement restore basic values to our society."

We are taught that the original native Americans had a phrase for saying one thing when you mean another: they called it 'speaking with forked tongue.' Christian Coalition leaders and trainers are very good at speaking with forked tongue, no doubt because they've had so much practice. Let's take a look at their training manual, as it relates to the procedure for making contact with a church. The manual says, "Once you have received the approval of your pastor, begin making the initial preparations for launching a Civic Concerns Ministry in your church." This would certainly sound like a proper and reasonable approach when read by a new recruit. But the reality is very different.

At the meeting in Vallejo which I described in the previous chapter, D.J.Gribbin told his audience, "Don't go first to the pastor." He told them to first go to the leaders, the deacons and so on. But the Coalition knows that if they talk like this in their manuals, or in their initial training sessions, they will scare off most new members, most of whom would be highly suspicious of a group that operates in this way. So they speak with forked tongue, and gradually point their recruits toward the accomplishment of a goal, keeping them focused and pumped up on the idea of winning victories for God and country, until the drive becomes so intense that the only important thing is winning. Along the way, decent, honorable people who don't see the whole picture, somehow manage to get blinkered, and start to believe the hype and the paranoia, and after a while they start to think that the end justifies the means. Voilá, another foot soldier for the movement is born.

Keeping in mind what Coalition leaders such as D.J.Gribbin actually advocate when they are speaking from the heart, I'd like to take a look at some of the other statements made in "Citizen Action." It is obvious that the Coalition's real tactics vary considerably from what they put in their recruitment manual.

"Many pastors may be leery of opening their doors to the outside influence of other organizations; however, if someone in the pastor's own congregation approaches, he will be less apprehensive. Make sure your pastor realizes he is not endorsing Christian Coalition or taking our name. He simply is giving you permission to be a contact and distribution point for information from our organization."

"One of the most successful ways to gain pastoral approval for becoming a Church Liaison is to offer to help start a Civic Concerns Ministry. This ministry is designed to keep members of the church informed on issues that will affect them and their families. Creating a Civic Concerns Ministry allows churches to be involved in issues without asking pastors to assume an overt political role, with which they may be uncomfortable. Explain to your pastor that the purposes of the Civic Concerns Ministry are:

- 1) To publicize issues and legislation to the entire church through bulletins, inserts, newsletters, and announcements.
- 2) To encourage responsible citizenship, including the importance of registering to vote, voting, and contacting elected officials.
- 3) To organize Issue Petition and Voter Registration Drives.
- 4) To act as a distribution point for Christian Coalition Voter Guides and other pieces of information.
- 5) To identify people in the church who will pray for the community and the nation."

"By serving your church as a Liaison and organizing the Civic Concerns Ministry, you are not asking the pastor to lend his name or the church's name to the Christian Coalition. You are offering a service. You are offering to educate the body of Christ about public policy and train Christians for effective citizenship and leadership. During the meeting with your pastor, mention the following advantages to forming a Civic Concerns Ministry:

- 1) A Civic Concerns Ministry takes potential political heat off the pastor, and places it in the hands of capable and politically astute lay leaders.
- 2) A Civic Concerns Ministry allows for pastoral oversight of civic involvement by church members to ensure that activities are conducted responsibly according to the desires of the pastor and his staff.
- 3) A Civic Concerns Ministry is perfectly legal under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue code. Its purpose is to educate Christians on the issues.
- 4) A Civic Concerns Ministry, like any other program in the church, fills a need by teaching Christians their responsibilities as citizens of the Kingdom of God and of the United States of America."

"Once you have received the approval of your pastor, begin making the initial preparations for launching a Civic Concerns Ministry in your church:

- 1) Talk with potential members of the Civic Concerns Ministry to share the idea and solicit their support.
- 2) Ask five or six people to serve with you on the Civic Concerns Committee. These people should be activists who will be willing to work.
- 3) Set aside a Sunday in the near future to launch a two-week petition drive or voter registration project in the church to introduce the church to the new Civic Concerns Ministry.”

The manual then points to the Voter Registration Drives, and the important role the church will play:

“Work with your church leadership to pick a two- or three-week period in which to conduct the registration drive. The dates of the drive should be placed in the church bulletin, announced from the pulpit, and mentioned in all adult Sunday School classes.”

This is how it happens. Step by step, under the guise of genuine Christian concern, the spiritual integrity of the Sunday church service is eroded. Wrapped up in a seemingly harmless ‘announcement,’ secular politics makes its way to the pulpit. Once that has been accomplished, the Church Liaison pushes to have the political word incorporated into the actual message being delivered from the pulpit. As the Liaison builds his constituency within the congregation, the pastor is under ever greater pressure to make his service more and more political, and soon will be required to allow political candidates to occupy the spotlight. And what do political candidates do? Why, they campaign, of course. They can call it anything they like, but the Christian Coalition is turning our country’s churches into campaign stops for the candidates who will be useful to the long-term goals of Pat Robertson and his organization. As this happens, the churches will no longer be a place of healing or spiritual growth, a place of refuge, a place where people can find strength or salvation. But they certainly will be an effective political arm for the voracious Religious Right.

Chapter 4 You're In The Army Now

The following statement is quoted directly from 'Citizen Action,' the Christian Coalition's recruitment manual:

"Our mission is to change the laws under which our nation is governed."

This is the same Christian Coalition which tells the Federal Government, the Internal Revenue Service, and the public at large that they are 'non-partisan,' that their sole function is to educate us all on how congressmen and senators vote.

With this in mind, let's examine this statement which appears under 'Petition Drives':

"Petition Drives are an excellent way to influence your local, state or federal government."

Then, as one advances within the organization and begins to hear the word from closer to the source, the language becomes more pointed, as these statements from the 'Leadership Manual' demonstrate:

"Welcome to an exciting two days of training and education! As a student of the Christian Coalition Leadership School, you are engaged in one of the most extensive and ambitious training programs in the history of Christian political action. When the first year of the Leadership Schools draws to a close, tens of thousands of new members will have been recruited into the Christian Coalition. Over one thousand five hundred students will have graduated from the Leadership School and will be trained to work in campaigns and causes in their states."

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that one cannot work in a campaign and still be 'non-partisan.' The Religious Right is very much like the Emperor Who Had No Clothes: they are blinded by their arrogance.

The 'Leadership Manual' then goes on to say, "Christian Coalition staff and Regional Directors (including your instructors for this school) will have logged an estimated 150,000 miles in one year, recruiting and training Christians in thirty states. During the next two days you will participate in one of the most intensive and comprehensive reviews of grass roots political technology in the nation."

Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed will state over and over again that the Christian Coalition does not endorse any political candidate. When word got out that the Christian Coalition had endorsed Bob Dole as the Republican nominee for President, Robertson and Reed quickly told the press that it was a couple of individuals, who happened to be Christian Coalition Directors, who were in favor of Dole, but that they were only expressing their own personal opinion, and were in no way speaking on behalf of the

Christian Coalition. Since Dole represents the antithesis of what the Coalition supposedly stands for, and especially in view of the fact that there were other candidates needing help who were far closer to Christian ideals, this could have been damaging to the firm. Robertson and Reed assured everybody once again, "Christian Coalition does not endorse or oppose any candidates."

As with most politicians, when Pat Robertson speaks in public he is usually working from a script. One day, however, on April 2, 1996, while he was talking on The 700 Club, he went off on his own train of thought and the result was a remarkably truthful moment. The L.A. Times had run a Conrad cartoon on the previous day, depicting Bob Dole on a cross, wearing a crown of thorns labeled, "Christian Coalition." The cartoon had upset Robertson, and the more the good Reverend talked about it, the more his ego whipped his righteous indignation into a fury, and soon he was stammering away as follows, "But this is, this is just an outrage. I mean in the first place . . . the Christian Coalition, without it, probably Bob Dole wouldn't be the nominee. They've helped him! But to put that up and say this is a crown of thorns and Bob Dole being crucified on , ah, the week before Holy Week. This, this, this whole thing is just an absolute outrage. And if people of faith permit this kind of thing to happen, ladies and gentlemen, then they'll be emboldened to do it over and over again . . . but the press has an anti-Christian bias. I've seen it over and over and over again . . . I think that it'd be important that there's a tremendous ground swell of anger against this kind of thing . . . if you happen to be a subscriber, one of the best ways to send a message is to cancel your subscription to the paper! That is the best message you can send."

Pat Robertson has supported Bob Dole in his run for the Republican party's nomination for the presidency, as indeed have many Americans. But Robertson has hidden that support from those who support him, the people who contribute to the Christian Coalition, the 700 Club, and his other businesses. Out of sight of all these people, behind the scenes, where power is brokered by the powerful, it was agreed long ago that Bob Dole would be the Republican nominee. And Pat Robertson was a part of that decision, in exchange for a position of power in the event that Bob Dole becomes the next president. This is politics as usual, but Robertson doesn't want the general public to know about it because it runs contrary to the image he projects, and it most definitely runs contrary to the Christian Coalition's stated philosophy. Robertson's message and his ministry are a tangled web of lies and half-truths, and while it's true that everybody is entitled to live their lives as they please, this man sets himself up as a role model for good, decent Christians, taking their time, taking their money, taking their faith, and not giving a damn about their immortal souls.

The depths of Pat Robertson's sincerity can be judged by reading the instructions regarding the 'Petition Drives' that he urges his followers to create. As reported earlier, in Chapter 3, the Christian Coalition states that a petition drive can be created over anything, that this is in fact simply a tool for identifying possible new recruits. All the names of these new prospects are funneled back into the huge databases the Coalition maintains at their headquarters in Virginia Beach, and are then used as a basis for their massive fundraising activities.

Then, in the 'Citizen Action' manual, we find the statement, "Signatures from the petition drive will serve as an excellent list of potential pro-family voters, Christian Coalition activists, and donors." Right there, in that sentence, the Christian Coalition's true colors show through, and their fundamental cynicism is revealed, that all who have eyes may see.

As I've shown, the Christian Coalition's campaign is centered around the church, and the targets are the many trusting and unwary Christians who consider the church to be their spiritual home. One of the first things new Coalition recruits are instructed to do is to obtain membership lists from local churches. These lists are then passed on to the phone workers, or, as one might say in the commercial world, the telemarketers. Let's face it, that's what they really are. Volunteer 'phone canvassers' are given specific, highly detailed instructions for every aspect of their duties, including when to make the calls and how many hours to work. Here's a quote from the 'Citizen Action' manual:

"Find a local businessman with several phone lines in his or her business. Arrange for you and your team of volunteers to use those phones for two to three nights a week for three weeks. Ask your volunteers to make calls for three hours each night. This is consistent enough for them to get through the lists and infrequent enough for them to stay motivated and not be overwhelmed by the task. Schedule volunteers on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights and have them make calls between six and nine in the evening. Do not schedule someone for more than one night a week. Do this for sixty days. Keep in mind the lists you are calling. If your volunteers are calling church lines they will get more positive response than if they are calling the voter registration list."

After further instructions on "personal visits," there is more evidence of just how cold and calculated this whole program really is:

"Whether you use phoning or door-to-door canvassing, the format of "how" you ask will always be the same. The following script is designed for use by phone volunteers, but is also suitable for any other form of voter identification. The main thing to keep in mind while phoning or canvassing is to be as pleasant as possible."

CHRISTIAN COALITION

VOTER IDENTIFICATION SCRIPT

Hello, may I please speak with _____ (name of voter.)

Hello, I am your neighbor _____, in (name of town/city) and I am taking a brief voter survey to get a better idea of the issues of concern to our community. Would you mind answering four brief questions? Great. Thank you.

- 1) What do you consider to be the most important issue facing the citizens here in _____?

- 2) When do you think abortion should be legal?
A) first trimester;
B) in cases of rape, incest, or when the life of the mother is endangered;
C) when the life of the mother is endangered.

- 3) _____ Question of local interest. (Must be pre-approved by the Christian Coalition national office.)

- 4) Would you like for me to send you some information on how to register to vote? (Do not ask this question if you are contacting a list of registered voters.)

This concludes our survey. Thank you for your participation.

To that friendly 'neighbor' who calls you, you are just a "number" to bring him or her recognition if you can be successfully steered toward joining the cause. To the caller's guru, Pat Robertson, you are nothing but a "mark," which is a word used by unscrupulous carnival people to identify someone they consider to be sucker, someone they think they can take advantage of and fleece. Every iota of my research proves time and time again that nobody in the Christian Coalition really cares about you as a person. That is a very sad thing to have to say about a group of people who consider themselves to be a Christian organization.

As we have seen, Pat Robertson considers all churches not as houses of God, but as personal distribution centers for his political material. This becomes very obvious as one reviews the Coalition's schools and training manuals. Here is the Voter Guide Checklist, as shown in the manual:

"A month before the election, hold a special meeting with all of the Church Liaisons in your chapter. The purpose of this meeting is to identify as many churches as possible that will serve as distribution points. Neighborhood Coordinators should put together a team of five to ten volunteers to assist in this effort."

"There may be some churches in your area that do not have Church Liaisons. Work with the Chapter Chairman in trying to arrange getting a shipment of voter guides to them."

"Meet with the pastors of those churches that do not have Church Liaisons. Give them the Christian Coalition Pastor's Information Packet. Ask them if they would be willing to have a voter guide inserted in their bulletin the Sunday before the election."

"List all of the churches that have committed to distribute the voter guides and begin assigning those churches to the volunteers for delivery."

"Arrange to have a team of phone workers call the local churches that have agreed to distribute voter guides to remind them that the voter guides will be coming and what to do with them. These calls will reaffirm the churches' commitment to distributing voter guides."

The next page of the 'Citizen Action' manual is titled:

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

"Voter guides are distributed with the greatest amount of ease and effectiveness through the local churches. As you begin to structure your distribution system with the help of your county Chapter Chairman, you should first identify all of the church contacts willing to help distribute the voter guides."

"There may be some churches for which you do not have a Liaison. If this is the case, you should approach these churches, in consultation with your Chapter Chairman, to see if they would be interested in distributing voter guides. If the pastor is hesitant, or has questions, you should give him a copy of the Christian Coalition Pastor's Packet, which will address his questions."

"Pastors should be assured that the voter guides are produced with their legal interests in mind and will in no way violate their tax exempt status as a 501(c)3 entity."

"Voter guides can be distributed by churches in several different ways. In order of effectiveness, voter guides can be distributed by:

- Inserting them into bulletins.
- Handing them out during the service.
- Handing them out before and after the service.
- Placing them on tables in the church."

"With the delivery of voter guides, please consider the following:

The deliveries should not be any sooner than two Mondays before the election. Ideally, you should arrange for a delivery the Tuesday before a Tuesday election. Most churches need to have time to structure their bulletins for the Sunday service and most churches can facilitate this with a Tuesday delivery."

"The volunteers should not just leave the voter guides at the church door. If possible, they need to deliver them to someone on the church staff. You should brief these volunteers with the information needed to answer basic questions about how the church should distribute them."

"Remind the churches that they should distribute the voter guides only on the Sunday before the election day."

The pastors really have no idea that they are about to be ambushed, and that people are gathering together behind their backs to come and restructure their churches. And the people who have teamed up with the Coalition's Liaison quite literally 'know not what they do.' They are fed a convincing line about restoring 'family values' to their church, and they genuinely belief that theirs is a noble mission. The final statement in the 'Citizen Action' manual is designed to reassure these 'soldiers' that theirs is an honorable war:

"Under the banner of the Christian Coalition, a vast network of volunteers is working to return America to the values that made it a beacon of freedom and liberty for the world. The State Chairmen, the Chapter Chairmen, the Church Liaisons, the neighborhood Coordinators (Captains), phone volunteers, voter guide distributors and all prayer supporters work together in unity of purpose to advance the influence of faith and family in American politics."

Now that we have learned something of the organization called Christian Coalition, let's meet the man behind it all. The man who wants to be America's leader and advisor. Ladies and gentlemen, The Reverend Pat Robertson.

Chapter 5 The Fleecing

Pat Robertson has built an empire on earth by selling pie in the sky. He promoted himself as a sincere Christian, concerned about "taking the Gospel to every creature," and spreading the good word of the Lord. He proposed a Christian Broadcast Network (CBN), which would offer Christian preaching and teaching twenty four hours a day, providing spiritual strength and encouragement to the faithful, and saving millions of souls everywhere who might not otherwise have access to salvation of any kind.

The financing for this venture was an entrepreneur's dream: it would all come from Christian donations. For who could resist the opportunity to invest in the Kingdom of Heaven? Many made 'sacrificial gifts' because they sincerely believed they were helping to spread the Gospel through their support of CBN. Others were deeply moved by Robertson's promise that their gift would be 'returned to them a hundredfold.' The Reverend found that P. T. Barnum was right when he said, "There's one born every minute." The Christian TV channel idea had struck a nerve, and the donations came pouring in. And the best part was that since this was a 'religious organization,' it was granted a tax exempt status under IRS code 501(c)3.

There would be nothing wrong with any of this if the people behind the project were as sincere as some of their contributors, many of whom were obviously doing without in order to be able to send in their donations. One network employee reported, "You should see the thousands of social security checks sent over to CBN." At the other end of the scale, Pat Robertson and his son Timothy made a personal ninety six million dollar profit off the donations of the gullible. There shall come a profit throughout the land, indeed. It is hard not to be cynical in the face of such ruthless opportunism.

For Robertson and his cronies, the CBN was only a stepping stone. They had never intended to let it be simply a benign Christian ministry. From the moment it was launched in 1977, the name was tagged with the phrase, 'The Family Channel.' Four years later, The Family Channel would absorb CBN, and become an advertiser-supported, entertainment oriented network, as part of Robertson's move away from the original Christian programming and toward what he called 'family values' programs. At the same time, however, he continued to broadcast aggressive telethons designed to raise money to "keep Christian programming on the air." Robertson even went so far as to plead with his viewers to send in their contributions, "otherwise we will be forced to begin eliminating stations, one by one, and the devil will have won!" Presumably, he was referring to the devil we *don't* know. But the blind faith of his audience never wavered, and in spite of the steady decline of Christian programs and the increase in the number of secular ones, millions of dollars poured in.

In 1988, CBN/Family Channel broadcasting revenue totaled 50.6 million dollars. Robertson's tax exempt revenues totaled 9.2 million dollars, with 'other' revenues coming to 41.4 million dollars. By all legal as well as moral considerations, the profits from these huge revenues should have been used for Christian goals. But they were not. Pat Robertson took the money and ran for President of the United States.

And there really is a great deal of money involved in this tangled web. The tax exempt ministry was the 'parent' of a group of nonprofit as well as for-profit organizations, including International Family Entertainment, Inc. (IFE), established in 1989 as a holding company by Robertson and his son Tim for one purpose: to buy out CBN and turn it into a commercial venture. Pat and Tim took one hundred and fifty thousand dollars of their contributors' money and transformed it into a personal fortune of ninety million dollars. Since CBN was registered with the IRS as a 'nonprofit' entity, there were no taxes paid on the transaction. That may be acceptable to some of the more devout Christian taxpayers, but there are undoubtedly many others who might feel cheated.

The IFE/Family Channel's revenues went up to 114 million dollars in 1991. Over and above the personal profits Robertson pocketed from his backstage wheeling and dealing, he drew a salary of 364,984 dollars. His son Tim earned 465,731 dollars. In 1992 those salaries were raised to 390,611 dollars for Robertson and 490,204 dollars for Tim. In 1995, the last preaching show was canceled from the network. It is significant that a condition of the sale of CBN was a guarantee that "The 700 Club" would still be aired in prime time. This show is promoted as a Christian program, but it is in fact one of Robertson's main fund-raisers on the network. And, along with a few half-hearted verses of Scripture tossed in here and there, that's all that's left of the Christian programming and spiritual content that his audience originally bought into. The devotion that Robertson inspires is truly amazing: the wolf in sheep's clothing has fleeced the flock, and they still come back for more.

Robertson's primary energies are entrepreneurial. Profit and power are his gods. In 1991, he traveled the country, speaking at rallies and gatherings everywhere. Not about family values; not about the Kingdom of God; not about living according to Christian principles. No, this was just another promotional tour, and Robertson was selling his latest business idea, a new 'multilevel' marketing company that would sell 'passport' discount-coupon books to Christian families. The 'product' offered discounts on everything from generic drugs to vacation condos, and the potential profits, as Robertson proclaimed, were unlimited. "With God there is no cap. In the multilevel business, the sky is the limit." His Scripture-quoting sales pitch lit the fire under some of the faithful, and out came the check books to invest in the Reverend's heaven-sent opportunity. The venture initially seemed to prosper, and branched out to include exotic products such as vitamins and skin creams from the Holy Land.

Company records show that millions of dollars from CBN, the tax exempt ministry, were funneled into this project, which was gloriously profitable for Robertson but turned out to be a losing proposition for all his victims. Lacking a gullible market like themselves, they lost many thousands of dollars when they were unable to sell the products they had trustingly bought from Robertson's company. Their investments sank

beneath the weight of brochures, fliers, and video tapes they were also obliged to purchase.

And then, barely a year later, the company abruptly changed directions, leaving their distributors with garages full of cartons of discount-coupon books, and the unpleasant suspicion that they had victimized.

Robertson became interested in a company that produced high-potency vitamin supplements, and soon decided to make them his main product line. Renaming the company, Kalo Vita, The Good Life Co., he offered a line of health products, including deodorized garlic pills, pills that help you slim while you sleep, and a nutritional drink called the American Whey. Company executives called the new line a "complete health-and-body management system." It was later found that the vitamins themselves were irresponsibly manufactured, with a potency that was too high for the average consumer. Also, according to former Kalo Vita president Mark Peterson, the product was being sold at an excessive markup, "We were buying it for 7 to 8 dollars a bottle, and selling it for 49.95."

The company had pledged to buy back any coupon books that distributors were unable to sell. But this turned out to be more of a sales pitch than a real commitment. When Ron Santom tried to return more than seven hundred fifty dollars worth of coupon books, he was told that the company's board had, "changed the policy," and that refunds were no longer being offered.

Lois Flockhart, a 76 year old retiree, says she lost more than seven thousand dollars, and was forced to refinance her Indianapolis home. Terry Young, who was a volunteer in Pat Robertson's failed presidential campaign, lost ten thousand dollars - along with his respect for Robertson. Young is understandably bitter, and says, "I can't even turn his program on anymore."

To be fair, though, both sides should be able to have equal time. So here's a statement made to the Washington Post by a representative of Pat Robertson's financial organization, "Profit is not a dirty word. The Robertsons are merely good Christian business executives."

While his loyal distributors were losing the investments they had made in his company, Robertson received \$38,609 in 1992 as his fee for making promotional speeches and videos which generated even more money for him and his associates. His family was also benefiting directly: his son Gordon served as the firm's chief lawyer, and one of his daughters was installed at the top of the pyramid-style distribution chain.

Robertson is not very subtle in his blatant greed. At the Christian Coalition's "Road to Victory" conference in September 1995, he included an advertisement in the program, inviting Coalition members to sign up as distributors for Kalo Vita, now wholly owned by Robertson. The ad stated, "Christian Coalition Members - You've Made Your Political Voice Heard!!! Now Make Your Economic Voice Heard!!!". And he introduced new products, such as 'Good Life spot remover,' 'Hydro-Complex Hair Care,' and 'Sea of Galilee face creams and mud masks'. No doubt keeping an eye on the marketing

success of the girl scouts, he soon plans to introduce a line of his own "personally-tasted oatmeal cookies".

As unsettling as Robertson's business practices appear to be, it is even more troubling that no charges have been filed against his operations. His promises that "membership in the company would solve family financial problems," are, at the very least, deceptive advertising. His implication that members would earn at least \$3,600 a month is downright misleading. His misrepresentations have caused many people to lose their life savings. His emotional, and highly successful, appeals for money from those who can't afford it would make snake oil salesmen everywhere take off their hats in awe and pride. But in spite of this unsavory track record, no fraud charges have been filed. Nor have there been any charges brought against the Reverend for selling the nonprofit Christian Broadcasting Network - for a profit. Now, let's back up a little and take a better look at this "good Christian business deal".

Money was solicited in a public offering for the specific purpose of building a nonprofit television network, to be used exclusively for broadcasting Christian material of a spiritual nature. Once this had been accomplished, the network was sold - for personal profit - so that it could switch to secular programming. Am I missing something or does this sound like a gigantic fraud? Surely anybody else who raised money for a specific purpose, didn't deliver on their promise, and then used that money for something else, would be sent straight to jail. But Robertson's wealth and the clout of his Christian Coalition give him an influence over politicians that essentially keeps him above the laws of the land. His influence apparently extends to the IRS also, because the activities of the Christian Coalition certainly don't entitle them to the tax exempt status they enjoy under a 501(c)3 classification. It's enough to make anyone want to go down to the temple and kick over a few money-changers' tables!

It is of interest to note that Robertson has a protégé, the Rev. Ronn Haus, an Assemblies of God minister who copied his master's model and created the United Christian Broadcast network, based in Concord, California. Haus began negotiating the sale of his own donor-built network as soon as it was built, while continuing to plead for contributions to "keep 24 hour a day Christian programming on the air" for four months after the sale had taken place! The public had no idea that the UCB had been sold to 'info-mercial' producer Harry Pappas until the deal was exposed by the media. All Christian shows gradually disappeared from the UCB's programming, with the exception of Haus's "Coast to Coast" production which, like Robertson's "The 700 Club," is a major money-maker for the good Reverend.

It's all about money, and that's all there is to it. Even when the sale was exposed, in May of 1995, the Rev. Haus continued with his fund raising. In fact, he didn't actually get around to admitting it until August, three months after the sale had taken place. And the following month he sent a letter, through the US Postal Service, asking for "generous gifts of love to keep Great Christian programming on Channel 42 (UCB) on the air." Under the circumstances, as in Robertson's case, one would think, "There's no way

anybody is going to buy that!" But they do. And in spite of the blatant hypocrisy and more than questionable fund-raising tactics, the money keeps pouring in.

Also as in Robertson's case, no investigations of the UCB have taken place, despite repeated demands from donors who felt that their money was stolen from them, despite the apparent mail fraud, market fraud, and the flaunting of both IRS and FCC regulations.

In spite of all this data, the NRB (National Religious Broadcasters), whose very reason for being is to make religious broadcasters accountable and to demand ethical fund-raising practices from their stations, looked the other way. This comes as no surprise when we learn the Rev. Ronn Haus sits on their Board of Directors.

So much for the Reverend Robertson's business practices. Now it's time to look a little more closely at the man who wants your money. Who and what is Pat Robertson?

He preaches Christian character. What kind of Christian character does he have?
He preaches morals. What kind of morals does he have?
He raises money on the abortion issue. How sincere is he?
Is he truly committed to the political issues he espouses regarding 'family values'?
He professes to be led by God. Does he really believe in God?

Chapter 6 Ministerial Franchises

In 1989, the Reverend Austin Miles, a former Assemblies of God minister, wrote a scathing, best-selling book, 'Don't Call Me Brother,' in which he exposed many Televangelists, including Pat Robertson. Miles had left the ministry in disgust, become a speaker at various humanist and atheist meetings, appeared on major TV programs to publicly denounce Christianity and the church, written another book slamming Christians ('Setting The Captives Free,' Prometheus Books), as well as magazine articles and contributions to anthologies. It astonished everyone in the field, therefore, when he returned to the fold a few years later. Considering how badly he had been damaged by Robertson and other 'Christian' leaders, it was remarkable to see him humbly attending Christian Coalition meetings as a supporter. What he endured would seem to be enough to have turned him against Robertson and the entire Christian world forever. When I had the opportunity to speak to him at a Coalition meeting, he said that he had made the mistake of keeping his eyes on man instead of God. He said he no longer blames God for man's failures.

As told in his book, 'Don't Call Me Brother,' Miles had enjoyed a successful career in show business before hearing the call to the ministry that sent him off on the evangelistic circuit. Thanks to his existing level of recognition, he was quickly accepted. He was one of the original guests on the 'PTL Club,' where he became a regular participant, as well as being invited to speak at the most prominent churches in the country. Things seemed to be going well for Miles.

It was in Pittsburgh where the sinister hand of the Religious Right reached out and tapped Miles on the shoulder. He was waiting for his cue to go on as the Master of Ceremonies at the Pittsburgh Gospel Opry at Carnegie Hall when a note was handed to him backstage. The message instructed him to call a Rev. Glenn McElwain at eleven o'clock that night, and listed a local number. Miles had never heard of the Rev. McElwain, and since he was in a perpetual state of exhaustion due to his demanding schedule, he did not return the call at the appointed time. McElwain, however, was not to be put off, and finally Miles had no choice but to call him.

McElwain said, "We've got to have a talk. Could you come to see me tomorrow?"

Miles responded, "Reverend McElwain, I'm very busy, with hardly a minute to spare. What is it you want to talk to me about?"

"Something very personal."

"Reverend McElwain, you'll have to be more specific. I cannot think of anything personal between us. In fact, I do not believe we have ever met. Are you a Assemblies of God minister?"

"No," said McElwain haughtily, "I'm with Pat Robertson's '700 Club,' and I think you had better talk to us about a problem you have."

"What?" Miles was incredulous, and getting irritated.

"That's right," continued McElwain, "we happen to know about a young lady you've been having sex with, and it's our job to stop your ministry until this thing is straightened out."

At that point, Miles hung up, believing the whole thing to be a 'nut call.'

Almost immediately, he was advised that his scheduled appearances at three church revivals and a speaking engagement at the Pittsburgh Charismatic Conference had all been canceled. The sponsors claimed their decision was based on "moral problems," and said they had "all the evidence they needed."

When Miles refused to submit to the pressure of the Pat Robertson cartel, several local ministers, prompted by Robertson, began attacking Miles, smearing their victim with vicious slander. "Austin Miles led her on and promised to marry her, and had sex with her on that premise," proclaimed James K. Barret, pastor of the Greater Pittsburgh Bible church.

Robertson even produced the woman with whom Miles was supposed to have carried on his scandalous affair. She was Bridget Serro, an eighteen year old, very pregnant, married mother of an infant daughter. And her father was the key to the mystery: Richard Serro was the pastor of a small Assemblies of God church in Bradenville. His church was too poor to support him, and Serro had to work at a diner to make ends meet. The lack of recognition gnawed away at Serro, and when Robertson offered him a way to step into the spotlight, he eagerly cooperated, and provided the story his boss needed.

Miles, who was married and had a daughter of his own, was furious, and he called Glenn McElwain. "Did you tell me that you were with Pat Robertson's organization?"

"That's right. I'm in charge of 'The 700 Club' counselors."

"What does 'The 700 Club' have to do with me?" asked Miles, desperately trying to figure out why he was being subjected to this nightmarish treatment.

"It is our job to police ministries. We decide which ministries go and do not go!" McElwain continued to insist that they should meet privately to discuss the matter.

Miles wanted to be sure he was talking to the right person, and demanded, "Who can I call down at 'The 700 Club' to verify that you are a representative of theirs?"

"James Murphy," said McElwain, and gave him a toll-free number.

To Miles' astonishment, the number put him through to the Christian Broadcasting Network in Virginia Beach, and he was connected to Murphy. To his further astonishment, Murphy told him that he was on top of the "problem" and suggested that a group "of us" meet discreetly in Pittsburgh to work it out, "in order to preserve his ministry."

At that time, Pat Robertson was still relatively unknown, and to the Reverend Austin Miles, as to most everyone else in those days, he appeared to be a sincere man of God. Miles could not believe that this man would be a part of anything as vicious as what was being done to him - especially since he was a fellow minister. And Miles still didn't understand why he was being treated in this way.

Miles asked Murphy, "Reverend McElwain said that it was the job of 'The 700 Club' to police ministries and to decide which ministries go and do not go. Is this true?"

"You better believe it!" Murphy shot back.

Miles called CBN in Virginia Beach several more times, asking to speak to Robertson, but the Reverend would not take his calls. Finally, Miles was able to speak to Robertson's secretary, Barbara Johnson. According to his book, Mrs. Johnson had a stern voice and gave the impression of having things well in hand. The conversation, which Miles admits he could scarcely believe was actually taking place, concluded with Mrs. Johnson saying, "I think you had better have that meeting in Pittsburgh and make that settlement."

"Settlement?" That was the first time it was suggested that money might be the solution to this "problem."

"I see, Mrs. Johnson, that the entire matter has come to a 'settlement.' What sum did you have in mind, in order to 'preserve my ministry'? Maybe a hundred thousand dollars?"

"That would show that you were sincere and of good faith," she replied. Miles was thunderstruck! He had been speaking half in jest, but Mrs. Johnson was in deadly earnest.

Other evangelists and ministers have said that they suffered the same treatment in those early days of Pat Robertson's career, and were forced to pay him protection money or be driven out of their ministries. But Miles resisted him, refusing to submit to this 'man of God', and he paid dearly for that, in his public as well as his private life.

The "victim," Bridget Serro, was eventually tracked down and questioned by Miles' representatives in Pittsburgh. After nervously contradicting herself several times, she finally broke down and admitted that the accusation was a lie. "But," she said, her face brightening again, "it made my husband jealous and more attentive to me, so it was all worthwhile."

Maybe it was worthwhile for Bridget, but the false accusation and all the attendant pressure ruined Miles' ministry and took its toll on his marriage. Did this concern the Robertson clan in any way? We have only to look at an event which took place while Pat was running for the presidency. When the Associated Press asked his wife, Dede, in February 1988 if the voters would forgive Senator Gary Hart for his involvement with Donna Rice, Mrs. Pat Robertson replied, "I don't know whether they will or not. After all, Mr. Hart is still carrying on these affairs." When challenged to back up her damaging accusation against Senator Hart, she finally admitted that she had no such information and was unable to substantiate her reckless charge. This "good Christian woman" was totally unconcerned with the effect her remarks would have on Senator Hart's marriage and his family. As we learned earlier, in Guy Rogers' classes at the Christian Coalition Training Schools, "The purpose is to get what you want." Do whatever is necessary to accomplish your goals. This is the creed the Robertson family lives by.

And yet, during that same presidential campaign, it was revealed that only two of the Republican candidates had had sexual relations with their wives before they were married: the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rev. Pat Robertson. This Pat Robertson, who claims to be a protector of family values and the sacredness of marriage, not only had premarital sex with his girl friend, he got her pregnant as well. Ironically enough, non-Christian candidates proved to have a much better understanding of morality than this self-righteous 'man of God'.

Here's another example of the shameful double standards of the man who calls himself a 'Standard Bearer'. During the presidential campaign, Robertson was challenged by former Congressman Paul N. ("Pete") McCloskey, Jr., who revealed that Robertson had hidden behind the influence of his late father, Senator A. Willis Robertson, to keep him safely away from dangerous duty as a Marine lieutenant in Korea. Robertson, reaching into the deep pockets of his faithful donors, lashed back with a \$35 million lawsuit, claiming "defamation". Robertson ultimately could not prove his case, and dropped the suit, but not before destroying McCloskey both financially and emotionally. In 'Don't Call Me Brother', Austin Miles tells how he threatened Pat Robertson with a lawsuit for slander, and was piously told by the Robertson pack that it was un-Christian to sue, citing 1 Corinthians 6. Apparently that Scriptural teaching could be used by Robertson when it suited him, and discarded when it didn't.

As a final comment on Pat Robertson's true character, I will include the following excerpt from my notes. On Saturday, April 27, 1996, in San Jose, California, I went undercover to the 80th birthday celebration of R. J. Rushdoony, the well-known Christian

Reconstructionist leader. The followers of Reconstructionism want to "reconstruct" the western world so that it is run according to biblical laws.

Herb Titus was there. Titus is a lawyer who once headed Regent University Law School, which is part of Robertson's organization. He and Robertson had once been very close, but then, suddenly and mysteriously, Titus quit the ministry.

During the course of the celebration I was able to position myself closely enough to Titus to overhear a remarkable conversation, and, since I was wired for sound for just such an opportunity, the conversation is recorded and can be heard on the CD which accompanies this book.

"I did not just leave, as it was represented. Pat fired me. I couldn't take it any more. Pat was changing. Everything was changing. One day I said, 'Pat, what you believed seventeen years ago and what you say now is so different'. And do you know what Pat said? He said, 'I don't know if I *ever* believed it!' Then, when I questioned him about his private and his public stands on various issues, he fired me! Pat will take this position to appeal to this group over here and get their support, and then he will take the opposite stand for this group over there to get their support. He only wants to be where the power is."

When asked if Robertson was a "One Worlder" (one who supports the United Nations' goal of a One World Government) Titus said, "Yes, Pat is definitely a One Worlder. And so is Bob Dole. He and Dole had this nomination worked out long ago. And just look at his latest two books, 'The New World Order', and 'The Changing Tide'. Read both of them. Those books totally contradict each other."

Then, Herb Titus, the man who had moved in Pat Robertson's innermost circle, who knew him better than anyone, was asked exactly the question I was hoping would be asked: "Does Pat, or did Pat ever, believe in God?"

Titus responded with a troubled look on his face, "I don't know that he really believes in anything."

Then a final question was asked: "Is Pat making a difference in the world?"

"Yes," answered Herb Titus slowly, "he is the cause of millions of Christian dollars being taken away from Christian work. Yes, he's making a big difference."

Chapter 7

Where There's Smoke . . .

"The 'Voter Guides' are non-partisan. We do not endorse any candidate. The Voter Guides are strictly educational, to show how candidates have voted in the past on issues that affect the Christian community, so that we can make an informed choice and put people in public office who best represent our values." Thus saith the Christian Coalition.

In actual fact, how honest is the statement given out as Gospel by Pat Robertson's corporation? Since it is said that one shall be known by one's actions, let's let the facts speak for themselves, and look at an e-mail message posted with Electronic News Service on March 31, 1996: "My husband was a Republican candidate for Congress. The Christian Coalition voter guide only used 6 questions from a 91-question survey. Of course the only ones they used were those where he disagreed with their views. The candidate they supported agreed 100% with their views. Of course, they reworded the questions also. The sad part is that we are Republicans and agree with about 85% of their views. I guess we were just not good enough for them."

The candidate this message refers to is Dave Jenkins of Copperas Cove, Texas, whose letter to "C.C. Watch" appeared on the Internet on May 14, 1996:

"Dear C.C. Watch,

I wanted to share with you my recent experience running for Congress in the Texas 11th District, and specifically Christian Coalition actions that unfairly characterized me and effectively put an end to my efforts to serve my district.

I was, frankly, somewhat supportive of the Christian Coalition when I announced. I certainly did not regard them as the enemy. I grew up in Newport News, Virginia, and we lived about a half mile from where Pat Robertson grew up. I am a graduate of a Baptist high school and majored in Religion at the College of William and Mary. While I disagree with some of the things the Christian Coalition wants to do, I had generally considered it a good organization with worthy, if sometimes mistaken goals.

But during the recent primary, I discovered firsthand that there is no room for disagreement with the Christian Coalition (CC). Compromise is not part of the agenda. Nor is "educating" the public. I believe that the Christian Coalition is pursuing a course that is against the will of most people in the Republican Party and the nation. The CC is using a few "hot button" topics, gross distortions, and a lot of intimidation to attempt to impose their will on Congress and the nation. I believe that most people do not

understand the comprehensive scope of the CC's agenda and their willingness to intentionally distort the facts to "bully" representatives into submission.

During the election I sent out a press release regarding the CC. The bottom line is that they took the answers I provided to them on a 91-question survey and used six of those answers to not only distort my position but to make me look like something I am not. It was unbelievable. This may seem like "sour grapes" since I was eliminated on March 12th. I wish I had won the primary. But if I was destined to lose and be vilified for my ideas, I would at least have liked the ideas I had to have been presented fairly by Christians and fellow Republicans.

I believe that the problem with CC is the leadership. Many of the people who send them money and offer support do not understand that these "leaders" will deceive them for political gain in a heart beat. It seems un-Christian and un-American to me. I want people to understand what the CC is all about and I hope that other Republicans will speak out. I always respected the Republican Party for speaking out about PC (politically correct) speech and its violation of the First Amendment.

Within the Republican Party, it has become bad form to call someone an extremist, regardless of his ideas; it has become increasingly acceptable to criticize candidates as moderates, when they do not want to go as far or as fast as you do. Compromise is considered a sign of weakness and disloyalty. If the CC will not compromise, logic dictates that its goal must be to control the Party and destroy those who stand in its way. Their goal is not a Republican majority or a Republican president, but political control for their ideas.

Thanks for your reports and updates. In my opinion they are quite accurate, especially as regards the issue of 'voter guides' and other CC partisan political activity. I generally don't believe in conspiracies, but I know what happened here and I don't want it to happen in other places.

Yours Truly,
David Jenkins
Copperas Cove, Texas"

It was Frank Rich, a syndicated columnist for the New York Times, who, in March 1996, spotlighted the deception of the tax-exempt Christian Coalition with regard to their "non-partisan" activity. Rich took a very close look at Bob Dole's record on abortion and his 100% approval rating from the Christian Coalition, which has clearly been promoting Dole's nomination right from the start of the campaign.

The rank and file of the Christian Coalition are finally catching on, and they are furious at what they see as a flagrant betrayal of their trust by Robertson and Ralph Reed. The information published in the 'voter guide' claims that Dole has a "100% pro-life voting record in the Senate." This is absolutely untrue, and it is the kind of cynical

manipulation that has frustrated many members to the point where they are ready to lead a revolt and join a third party.

An outraged Kenneth Lowndes, who still retains the title of Co-Chairman of the Camden County Christian Coalition of New Jersey, declared:

"Bob Dole voted for F.A.C.E. (Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act), he voted for Federal funding of fetal experimentation, he voted to confirm Clinton's U.S. Supreme Court pro-abortion-to-the-core justices Ginsburg and Breyer. It isn't as if Pat Robertson and Ralph Reed don't know this. They do. The lie they are spreading is a deliberate lie, and in open contradiction of the IRS classification they choose for the organization. They are deliberately perpetrating a fraud against the Christian voters by widespread dissemination of this lie, a calculated effort to illegally assist the Bob Dole for President campaign.

Many Christian voters are busy people, like everybody else. If the Christian Coalition's 'voter guide' states that Bob Dole has a 100% pro-life voting record, they voted based on that information. This is an outrageous fraud, which undermines and discredits the efforts of the Coalition nationwide to provide reliable information about candidates on major issues.

If Ralph Reed or Pat Robertson wish to support Bob Dole, it is clearly their right to do so as individuals. It is clearly wrong for them to co-opt the use of the Coalition's 'voter guides' as part of their private effort to elect Dole.

We are sick and tired of seeing the Christian Coalition take up partisan positions and efforts to support anybody in the race but a true Christian. Could you imagine a Jewish coalition that, every time it had an opportunity to support a Jewish candidate, refused to do so? Or a black coalition that only backs white candidates, even when there is a black candidate? This is clearly the pattern of the leadership of the National Office of the Coalition in Virginia: 'Let's take a look at the Christian candidate and find reasons to avoid backing their efforts'. Robertson-Reed clearly have an acquired Christian-candidate inferiority complex they need to work out on their own.

We call upon Robertson and Reed to immediately halt the distribution of the Bob Dole Campaign's alleged Christian Coalition 'voter guides', and further, to issue public apologies to individual members of the Coalition who in good faith support good candidates like Pat Buchanan and others, and to make that apology substantial, spend twice the amount of the money publishing and distributing these fraudulent 'voter guides' on a radio/TV/newspaper media effort to communicate this apology. This apology campaign must be broadcast throughout every state where they have attempted to rig the election outcomes with these fraudulent 'voter guides'."

Another organization, the Red Rock Eater News Service, placed a notice on the Internet to, "call upon all those of good will to begin filing complaints with the Federal Election Commission in Washington, D.C. by notarized statements, requesting that

appropriate sanctions be applied to Robertson-Reed. Their misconduct must be addressed. This type of anti-Christian activity in the name of Christ is intolerable and must be stopped by all proper means. It is with great sorrow that this response has been made essential by the activities of these otherwise good men."

A special note was added: "It seems highly unlikely that such blatant support coming from Robertson-Reed comes without the knowing approval of Senator Bob Dole, presenting the additional appearance of collusion. The question that now comes forth is, 'What did Bob Dole know, and when did he know it?' It is our considered opinion that investigations are now in order."

In considering the sincerity of the Robertson-Reed claim to be the "champions of human life and family values," it would seem relevant to ask why they have not spoken out in a champion-like way against the tobacco industry, which hooks three thousand American children every day, and causes more than one hundred thousand miscarriages in the United States every year. These too are innocent and unborn victims of the kind the Christian Coalition pretends to be so determined to protect.

Not only have the 'voter guides' failed to make tobacco an issue, but Ralph Reed openly criticizes efforts to control tobacco. In August of 1995, he dismissed President Clinton's "tobacco crusade" as a political stunt, and gloated that it had "created a lot of problems" for Democrats in Kentucky. Two weeks later, in his address to the Christian Coalition's annual convention, Reed derided Clinton for preaching against the dangers of tobacco after having "gutted the drug czar's office".

In May/June 1996, Mother Jones magazine asked these questions: "Why has Ralph Reed resisted confronting tobacco? And why doesn't Robertson overrule Reed, as he reportedly did two years ago when Reed strayed from Robertson's anti-NAFTA position?" The answer may be that Reed's motives and responsibilities are different to Robertson's. Robertson is a minister and broadcaster, accustomed to speaking his mind freely. Reed, however, is primarily a political strategist, who wants to avoid the very mistake he attributes to Clinton: supporting tobacco regulations that create "problems" for those in his own party. In this case, Robertson evidently won't - or can't - overrule Reed.

"Reed's stance is reflected in the Christian Coalition's grass roots. I haven't gotten any calls from county leaders or the field saying we've got to do something," reports Phil Crowson, the Coalition's North Carolina Field Director. "Our big issues are more about saving unborn lives and reducing the amount of illegal pornography." But when asked about the tens of thousands of unborn lives stubbed out each year by smoking-induced miscarriages, Crowson expresses genuine shock. He's never been told about the research on miscarriages, which Scott Ballin, former Coalition Chairman on Smoking or Health, provided to Reed and Robertson a year earlier."

So why are Robertson and Reed being so hypocritical? Why do they whip themselves into a righteous frenzy when they are talking about abortion, then stroll arm-in-arm with the tobacco industry into the shadows? Earlier in this book I mentioned that money had a lot to do with what the Christian Coalition did and didn't do, and this is an excellent illustration of that point. The tobacco industry provides the Christian Right with a vast base of grass roots support, and is a staunch Republican ally. Will religious conservatives continue to accept tobacco's support in exchange for their silence? You bet they will. They do not want to "create problems" with key party donors. In the 1993-94 election cycle, for example, tobacco companies gave \$259,027 to the National Republican Senatorial Committee, which in turn reportedly gave \$175,000 to the National Right To Life political action committee. There is enough tobacco money floating around that it has probably inhibited some groups from speaking out.

"If the tobacco income was no longer donated to the church, many churches would completely go under," says Steve Sumerel, the Director of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention's substance abuse and family life division. "The Baptist pastors out there know that. Why pick on an issue where you know you're going to lose your job?"

Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), a favorite of the Robertson-Reed group, and one of the politicians who scored a 'perfect grade' on the Christian Coalition's 1994 Senate scorecard, completes the irony. While denouncing homosexuality as a threat to public health, he has staunchly and consistently defended the tobacco industry. His office even seems to help the tobacco industry keep an eye on pro-life groups. In a memo published in December 1995 by the Washington Post, a Philip Morris lobbyist informed his superiors during the 1989 search for a new surgeon that, "the pro-life community has coalesced around a Massachusetts physician who has assured Senator Helms that she has no strong anti-tobacco bias."

This infuriated Reverend Patrick Mahoney, Executive Director of the pro-life Christian Defense Coalition, who said, "It's obvious that Senator Helms is more concerned about contributions from Philip Morris than standing for the dignity of human life."

At a recent event, even House Speaker Newt Gingrich refused to step up to the bully pulpit and denounce tobacco advertising, although it obviously targets children. And it's no wonder. Only a few weeks earlier, Gingrich had attended a tobacco-sponsored "Salute to Newt" where he collected contributions of \$100,000 each from the Chairmen of Philip Morris, R.J.Reynolds, and Brown & Williams.

It is a matter of record that the main contributors to the Religious Right are the Adolf Coors Foundation and other liquor interests. But that is another book.

We all tell little white lies. We have all, at one time or another, tried to appear to be something we are not. Usually, we do these things in order to get something we want. These may not be our most endearing qualities, but they are, I believe, part of human nature. And most of us know there are limits to how far we are prepared to go with our deceptions. But the Christian Coalition knows no such boundaries. Their desire for power is gigantic, their hypocrisy is monstrous, and it seems they will stop at nothing to get what they want.

Chapter 8 How To Lose 501(c)3

In a March/April 1996 interview with 'The Door', Ralph Reed is quoted as saying, "We've encouraged people to become active in both political parties. We do not recruit candidates. We do not endorse candidates. We do not contribute to candidates. And there is no such thing as a Christian Coalition candidate for office. So we have very explicitly avoided that model."

On May 18, 1996, the Nickelodeon Channel ran a documentary titled "The Religious Right", featuring Senator Arlen Specter and Ralph Reed, in which Specter made this statement: "Ralph Reed and I worked together to have Bob Dole elected as the Republican nominee."

There it is, clearly and unequivocally stated: the confirmation that the leadership of the Christian Coalition plotted Bob Dole's nomination behind the backs of Robertson's loyal supporters, totally against their wishes and in flagrant violation of the fundamental premise of their organization.

Robertson and Reed have raised millions of dollars under the pretext of preserving life by fighting abortion, which they both proclaim is "an uncompromising issue." But the candidate they have maneuvered stealthily into the nomination is Bob Dole. This is what Dole's record shows him to be:

- Opposes a Constitutional ban on abortion.
- Opposes choosing and nominating only pro-life judges.
- Opposes choosing a vice-presidential running mate based only on pro-life considerations..
- Supports federal funding for experimentation on aborted babies.
- Supports aborting unborn children for the father's crime of rape or incest.
- Supported the federal FACE law which made peaceful pro-life sit-ins a felony.
- Refused to sign a pledge supporting the pro-life plank in the Republican Party platform.
- Has voted to confirm every pro-abortion Supreme Court Justice in the last fifteen years.
- Has consistently voted for taxpayer funding for Planned Parenthood.

Let's take another look at Reed's statements to 'The Door':

“We do not recruit candidates.” This is fiction. The fact is that Christian Coalition area chapters actively encourage their members to run for public office - any office - and then offer to help them win their elections.

“We do not train candidates.” This is fiction. The fact is that ‘Director’s Meetings’ do just that. Earlier in this book I described Guy Rogers in his red suspenders as he instructed actual and potential candidates on the finer points of being elected to public office.

“We do not endorse candidates.” This is fiction. The fact is that they not only endorse Bob Dole, they are actively trying to get him elected. And, of course, that also applies to Reed’s statement that, “there is no such thing as a Christian Coalition candidate for any office.”

The more we look, the more we see that one word which keeps cropping up in describing this Christian Coalition and its leadership is ‘hypocrisy’. And that word leads straight to the door of Alan Keyes, a prominent insider who is boosted by Robertson-Reed at every opportunity. Keyes is a highly skilled orator who tells people what they want to hear about basing our society on the Bible, following Christ, protecting our sovereignty, opposing abortion and homosexuality, bringing God back into our schools and establishing family values. Keyes is so good at playing the part of a man who is passionately committed to these beliefs that he never fails to bring excited audiences to their feet. But when we stand back and look at the facts, we see, once again, a hypocrite whose private words and deeds clearly show that his public speeches are an empty sham.

I was fortunate enough to overhear a conversation in which a former member of Alan Keyes’ campaign said, “I am sorry to have to tell you that I am no longer involved with Alan Keyes. He is an absolute phony. He is a secular humanist! He said that he does not feel that there should be a law against sodomy, and that the Bible should not be the law of the West since this is such a pluralistic society.” A very prominent conservative individual, who knows Keyes well, was then called over to hear these statements repeated for his benefit. This individual agreed that this assessment was consistent with the Keyes he knows, recalling that once, after he had publicly questioned these inconsistencies, Keyes had called him, yelling and screaming that he had, “ruined my campaign.”

In addition to his hypocrisy, Alan Keyes also suffers from delusions of grandeur as well as what is referred to in certain circles as ‘sticky fingers’. Throughout his career he has been dogged with problems of ‘money mis-management’. When he was running for the Senate it was discovered that he had used campaign funds for his own personal use. When confronted, he admitted that he had indeed misappropriated the funds, stating by way of justification that, “A man’s gotta live.”

In the early days of Keyes’ presidential bid, Sara Hardman, the California Director of the Christian Coalition, arranged for him to address a large gathering at Church On The Way and a prayer breakfast with Southern California’s most powerful

clergymen. Most people with their sights set on the White House would consider bookings like these to be, literally, heaven-sent opportunities. Keyes agreed to come, and Hardman went ahead and made all the arrangements.

When she called back to reconfirm, Keyes said, "I didn't sign nothing with you. I'm very busy and I have some important speaking engagements." Hardman was, understandably, bewildered, and explained that she had made some very definite commitments, based upon his having given his word that he would attend. But Keyes was unmoved. After much negotiating, however, he finally agreed to come if Hardman would provide, for himself and his entourage of fifteen, a private jet, a limousine, hotel accommodation and meals, plus a huge honorarium and a commitment to raise funds on his behalf.

Compare this performance with the response from another candidate, Howard Phillips, who was also invited by Hardman. Phillips sent word that he would be glad to come, that he would travel tourist class, and that he would stay in a Motel 6. On another occasion, this same Howard Phillips offered Alan Keyes an opportunity to speak to a group of highly influential potential backers in St. Louis. Keyes wouldn't even consider it without a guarantee of a \$15,000 honorarium, plus a private jet and luxury hotel accommodations.

After her experience with Alan Keyes, Sara Hardman said she wouldn't vote for him to be Dogcatcher, and expressed disgust with the way Pat Robertson continues to support him, and books him as a speaker at major Christian Coalition events. Based on what we know about both Alan Keyes and Pat Robertson, it's not hard to figure out what these two see in each other, considering how much they have in common.

Chapter 9 Resign - Or Else!

Any good modern spy story always includes some high-tech gadgetry that allows people to see and hear what's going on behind the scenes, essentially to have access to forbidden information. My personal 'sound system' permitted me to eavesdrop on conversations and record them for the benefit of my superiors. But we suspected that 'the other side' was also using some kind of electronic snooping. There had been too many instances when the Christian Coalition, Focus On The Family, Concerned Women For America, and other groups seemed to know in advance when Congressional bills were going to be introduced. We had definite reason to believe that the fax machines in the offices of opposition political leaders were being tapped.

Our suspicions were confirmed by the circumstances surrounding the defeat of HR-6, a bill which would require state licensing of all educational facilities, including home schools. Knowing that the Religious Right would oppose the bill with every means at their disposal, its author, George Miller (D-CA) tried to slip it through with no public notice during a holiday session when most people, including the Christian movement, wouldn't be paying close attention. To everyone's astonishment, Christian Coalition organizations and sympathetic Republican leaders seemed to appear out of nowhere, and the bill was forced to its knees before it even got out of Miller's office.

My investigations gradually led me to a man I shall call 'Ned'. For security reasons, the only thing I can reveal about Ned is that he is a computer specialist who is considered a genius. His knowledge of electronics is phenomenal, and his skill is extraordinary. For a while, I was able to stay close to Ned, monitoring his conversations and keeping track of the people with whom he associated.

I finally managed to figure out who was Ned's best friend, a man I shall call 'Curtis', and I engineered an introduction. My membership in the Christian Coalition seemed to accelerate his acceptance of me and we bonded rapidly. Curtis was proud of Ned, and it wasn't hard to get him to talk about his friend. They worked together on Christian projects, and it wasn't long before Curtis let me know that Ned was the one who exposed the HR-6 bill. "There are only a small handful of people scattered around the US who can do that kind of hacking," he told me with evident pride. He also told me that he and Ned had met through a Christian Singles group.

I immediately joined the Singles group, and began socializing with Ned. I soon realized that he is an expert in wire tapping. "It's as simple to tap a fax machine as it is a phone or a computer," he said. "You just need access to the fax machine you're targeting so you can plant the device. And that's easy. Or I can plant the device, very simple and quick, at the phone company itself." Ned went on to say that the White House and even

the Capitol itself would be easy to tap, "because there are so many wires in those particular boxes that nobody would notice an extra little one."

Nobody ever mentioned the word in these conversations, but what we were talking about is known as 'espionage'. And I began to wonder what role it might be playing in the recent spate of very puzzling "retirements" among Senators and Congressmen, mainly Democrats.

Since the last election an unprecedented exodus has been in progress, with a record forty five members of Congress canceling plans to run for reelection or simply resigning from their office on the spot. And rumors say we haven't seen the end of it. What's going on? These departing officials were by no means obscure: they held high offices; they served on appropriations, rules, armed services, and agriculture committees and sub-committees. People don't just give up that kind of power, pay, and perks without some extremely good reasons.

And yet most of them say they had finally realized they needed to "spend more time with my family." So said Rep. Ron Coleman (D-Texas), the young ranking minority member of the powerful House appropriations sub-committee on telecommunications. Rep. Jack Fields, the controversial Republican chairman of the House telecommunications and finance committee, explained, during a tearful press conference, that he wants to spend more time with his kids. General Colin Powell, whom many believed could have taken the White House without a struggle, suddenly withdrew from the race, stating concerns for his wife's health.

Pat Schroeder already had her reelection bumper stickers printed when she bolted. So had Charles Wilson (D-Texas), who had already begun booking media time and space for his reelection campaign when he suddenly announced his retirement. Rep. Ron Coleman, already quoted above, made his announcement at what was supposed to have been his reelection kickoff party.

And why these sudden decisions? With a straight face, Schroeder said that she wanted to leave her \$133,600 a year (plus perks) job to be a writer. Wilson said he retired to become a "consultant".

Certainly, there is the matter of retirement pensions, which are enormous: in the millions for most of the group under discussion. But these benefits grow larger every year, so quitting early to take the pension is a little like killing the golden goose. No, that won't wash, at least not for forty five retirees all at approximately the same time.

My time with the Christian Coalition has left me in no doubt that they will do whatever it takes to remove Liberals and Moderates from office and replace them with their own people. Violence is by no means discounted. A recurring theme at all the meetings I attended was, "taking the Kingdom by force," which is an incorrect biblical quote from Matthew 11:12.

At one particular meeting, after a showing of a video of the Waco tragedy and a discussion of the New World Order, I was present during the following conversation between two well-known Christian Coalition supporters:

"Clinton needs to be shot," said the first man.

"I agree to that," answered the second man.

Then the first man, who happens to be a highly skilled sharp shooter, said, "No, taking out the President isn't the way to do it. Here's the right plan. We take out thirteen Liberal Democrat Senators, and twenty six Liberal Democrat Congressmen. That would put the other 575 in constant fear for themselves, their wives, and their children. Every Liberal would require round-the-clock protection, which would tie up twenty thousand troops. This fear would pressure them to resign, and then we can put in our own people."

This could have been simply an emotional outburst, in the passion of the moment, after we had all watched a very violent video. Still, when the exodus from the Capitol began, a little over a year later, I could not help but think back on that conversation, and check my notes and listen to the tapes I had secretly recorded. And wonder.

Chapter 10 Power Players And The Plays

So much harm has been caused by Robertson-Reed and their Christian Coalition that alarmed clergymen have begun to raise their voices against the hijacking of their churches by the Religious Right. More than eight prominent Protestant, evangelical, Orthodox and Roman Catholic leaders, including six Catholic bishops, signed a paper in which they set out their views on church and state. The core statement in their proclamation, "The Cry For Renewal: Let Other Voices Be Heard," is as follows:

"America is caught in a spiritual crisis, worsened by overtly politicized churches. Christian faith must not become another casualty of the cultural wars. Inflamed rhetoric and name-calling is no substitute for real and prayerful dialogue between different constituencies with legitimate concerns and a gospel of love, which can bring people together. The almost total identification of the Religious Right with the new Republican majority in Washington is a dangerous liaison with political power."

Jim Wallis, the pastor of Sojourners Community church in Washington, says, "The Religious Right has been such a strong and singular media voice on matters of politics and morality that even the word 'Christian' has become associated with a particular brand of very conservative Republican politics. But the public perception of a right-wing evangelical juggernaut is a false impression that we would like to correct."

Baptist evangelist Anthony Compolo, president of the Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education concurs, "That one point of view does not even represent the evangelical community, let alone the Christian community."

The group proclamation condemns all the belligerent rhetoric, from Christians at both ends of the spectrum, which attempts to divide Christians into the political left or right. Anthony Compolo speaks to the heart of the issue, "We are called by Jesus to be agents of reconciliation, to bring people together, to solve the problems of the community. That's the only kind of politics we are into, the politics of reconciliation, not the politics of polarization."

Amongst the proclamation's signatories there are several moderates and even a few theological conservatives whose names are not often seen on documents of this kind. For example, Steven Hayner, president of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, an evangelical youth organization; Millard Fuller, president of Habitat for Humanity; and J.I.Parker, a theology professor at Regent College in Vancouver and a senior editor of the magazine "Christianity Today".

Another senior editor of the same magazine, the Reverend Edward G. Dobson (no relation to Dr. James Dobson), who is also the pastor of Calvary Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, says, "The church's energy should be spent in redeeming the lost, not in rallying against them." His editorial, published in 'Christianity Today' on May 20, 1996, speaks for a growing number of pastors who feel the time has come to take a stand against the encroachments of the Christian Coalition. Although he writes from a Christian point of view, his thoughts are relevant to everyone, believers as well as non-believers, who share a concern about the role of politics in religion. These are Reverend Dobson's words:

"Nearly every week I receive letters and telephone calls from Christians soliciting our church's involvement in a political issue in our community. The requests range from pressuring public-school board members to fire a homosexual teacher to protesting in front of an abortion clinic.

The people who call me are passionate, and they want something done. They want me as a pastor to be a cheerleader for their cause, and they want access to the thousands of people who attend our church. If I decline their request (which I do), they are often upset with me, and in subtle ways they call into question my Christian convictions. Nearly every pastor I know faces this same pressure on a regular basis.

Now, as individual believers we can and should exercise our privilege as citizens in a democracy. Christian citizens have the opportunity to inform themselves on the issues, vote their conscience, run for office, and lobby for legislation.

But the church - as the church - cannot allow itself to be co-opted by political action; and pastors and others who speak for the church cannot allow themselves to be distracted from the gospel by partisan engagement. As a former board member for the Moral Majority, I know the potential dangers of this kind of political activity - the possible jettisoning of the gospel for a political agenda.

The acid test came several years ago when the Grand Rapids City Council passed a Gay Rights Ordinance to protect homosexuals from discrimination. The reaction was immediate and volatile. A group of pastors formed a coalition to collect signatures to force the issue to a public vote, believing that the public would repeal the Ordinance. Petitions and signatures were collected primarily through churches, but our church refused to cooperate.

I stated publicly that gays were discriminated against in our community, but that a special ordinance was not the most appropriate way to deal with it. I have also stated publicly that homosexual activity is sinful.

But because we did not permit anyone to pass out petitions in our church, and because none of the church's resources were involved in the campaign, we were called "weak" on the gay issue, seen as duped by the gay community and as promoting gay rights in our community.

We held firm. While individual Christians within our church were free to work toward passing the petition, we as a corporate body did not participate. The petition drive fell several thousand signatures short, a number our church could have easily generated, and so we were blamed by some for the petition drive's failure. I discovered that refusing to involve the church in political activity is not popular among some Christians.

There appears to be an increasing hostile group among evangelical Christians. Their anger is fueled by fundraising letters, newsletters, tapes, and videos from national ministries. These ministries are sometimes alarmist, trading on the fears of Christians who clearly see the moral decline of the surrounding culture. They not only advocate the "right" moral positions (the declaration of truth), they advocate the "right" moral action (the application of truth). Their moral action often includes political action, lobbying, and association with the "right" political party. The unfortunate implication is that it is not enough to believe right, you must also act right according to their definition.

To deal with these pressures for political action, our church has developed these perspectives to guide us:

We should not expect or demand that the political system be Bible-friendly. Some American Christians expect their government to reflect their own biblical views. Few Christians in other countries expect the same of their governments. We should not expect people and the political systems they create to reflect our values when they do not share our Christ.

To expect public institutions to defend or promote Christian values is to expect more of these institutions than the Bible does. The Bible teaches that the primary function of government is to promote an ordered and structured society where wrongdoing is punished and right is commended. Of course, some believe this is a Christian nation and ask, 'Should we not return to the faith of our founding fathers?' In my opinion, this is not an option because the faith of our founding fathers consisted largely of expecting rational men to do the right thing, failing to take human sinfulness with full seriousness. And it failed (despite its rhetoric) to treat all people equally, favoring as it did white landowners while permitting and promoting slavery and the second-class existence of women.

We have clear responsibilities to the political system, even when it is hostile to us. First, we are to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-4). Remember, this instruction was written when Nero was emperor, and he was decidedly anti-Christian. We need to pray for President Clinton just as we did for Presidents Reagan and Bush.

Second, Paul tells us, we are to live "peaceful and quiet lives." In an atmosphere of divisiveness and partisan hostility, this counsel of civility can guide us both as Christian citizens and as a church body. Even when the government is hostile to us as a Christian body, Paul counsels, we are to walk softly, speak quietly. This instruction is in stark contrast to the angry rhetoric of many Christians today.

Third, Paul concludes, we are to live godly and holy lives. Our lives should do the speaking for us. And we are to keep the main thing the *main* thing, pleasing God who "desires everyone to be saved." Our focus is to preach the gospel and live in relationship with the public order so as to make the gospel attractive.

We should keep the church out of partisan politics and political action. We have chosen as a church to be politics-free. We do not pass out petitions or voting records. We do not march for or against anything. We do not promote letter-writing campaigns. While some members of our church may do some or all of the above - exercising their freedoms and obligations as citizens in a democratic system - we do not believe that the church, as a church, should be engaged in any of these activities.

This is, however, not to say that the church should ignore injustice and remain silent in the public square about grievous wrongs. The preaching of biblical truth will often be countercultural. A prophetic voice speaking against the tide of public opinion is sometimes precisely what is needed from the church. But the accent must always be on what can be done to meet the needs of suffering people; it must be an invitation to those with the political power to work with us to solve problems and help people lift themselves above circumstances. Attacks on leaders in either party are not the church's business.

We should demonstrate the authenticity of the gospel where we live. Christians are concerned about the social and moral issues of today, but what are we doing in our own communities to deal with these issues? We are against abortion, but what alternatives are we providing? What kind of love and concern do we demonstrate for the mothers who walk into abortion clinics, and the people who work in them? We are concerned about the failure of welfare, but what are we doing to empower marginalized people with Christ and through job training and opportunity? If we are going to demand better from the government, should we not first live out the social implications of the gospel in our own communities?

Our church is on a journey of discovering the social implications of the gospel. A group of people takes meals every night to homeless people living under bridges in Grand Rapids. We have a ministry that works with dependent people and families that offers financial and spiritual counseling and other means to help them out of dependence. We are working together with eleven key African-American churches in our community to combat racism and provide job training. Living out the gospel by dealing with injustice and sharing our resources with marginalized people is the appropriate strategy for the church.

We cannot expect politics to offer permanent solutions. Politics cannot offer permanent solutions because it is based on a flawed view of sin and society. One of its premises is that if you elect the "right" representatives who will pass the "right" legislation, you will have the "right" society. But we know this is not true. You don't change society from the outside by legislation, you change it from the inside - one person

at a time. Ultimately, the Great Society and the Contract with America will fail. The only permanent solution is the gospel of Christ, which changes people from the inside out. Some Christians have lost this perspective.

During the debate over the Gay Rights Ordinance, a person asked me two troubling questions: "Ed, if you are not going to take a stand now, when are you going to take the stand?" and "If you don't take a stand now, won't it be too late further down the road?" Reflecting on these questions, I have identified three simple principles.

First, I will make it my first priority to share the good news. My consuming commitment is to the gospel. I fear that overt political involvement will lead to polarization and alienation from the people who need to hear the gospel.

Second, I must continue to develop a biblical, social conscience. The poor, the homeless, the abused, the imprisoned, and the sick (including HIV-positive people) must be within the circle of my love and touch.

Finally, as a pastor, I will approach the area of political involvement with extreme caution. When will I stand up? Whenever I am told by political authority to disregard God's truth, or asked to worship other gods, or told to deny the gospel. Short of these circumstances, I will continue to preach the whole gospel to the whole person, and in so doing will resist the temptation and pressure toward politicizing the church."

These thoughtful words suggest a reasonable response - for all concerned citizens, regardless of religious or spiritual inclination - to the bullying forces of the Religious Right who want to play on peoples' fears, and divide them and turn them against each other for their own gain.

Chapter 11 True Religious Freedom

Much has changed in our country since December 15, 1791, when the famous First Amendment took effect. But those simple words, written two centuries ago, still ring true today:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for the redress of grievances.”

In those earlier days, many people were still unable to read, and at election time they needed help understanding the written words of the various parties and candidates. Men of the cloth came forward to provide that assistance, so that members of the public might be informed and adequately prepared to cast their votes wisely. But, human nature being what it is, the temptation to influence the vote was more than some pastors could resist, and they began abusing their position of trust by pressuring their congregations to vote according to the views of the church, rather than according to their individual conscience.

This miscarriage of democracy was brought to the attention of Thomas Jefferson, who, in 1802, wrote a Letter to the Danbury Baptist Convention, seeking to correct this unconstitutional situation. Jefferson said:

“Believing that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their Legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between Church and State.”

It was Jefferson’s dedication to the fine principles of true religious freedom which helped bring about many of the laws we still enjoy in this country today.

Of equal interest, or perhaps, in a way, even more so, since it is so much more explicit and relevant to our subject, is this lesser-known document, from just a few years earlier in our history. This is Jefferson’s *Virginia Statute For Religious Freedom*, January 16, 1786.:

“An Act For Establishing Religious Freedom.

I. Whereas Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the Holy Author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty Power to do; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible ones, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and though all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor, whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporary rewards, which proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labors for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry; that therefore the proscribing of any citizen as unworthy of the public confidence, by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow-citizens he has a natural right; that it tends only to corrupt the principles of that religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing with a monopoly of worldly honors and emoluments those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though indeed these are criminal who do not withstand such temptations, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he (the civil magistrate) being of course judge of that tendency will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough, for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons - free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them:

II. Be it enacted by the General Assembly, that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion; and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

III. And though we well know that this assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, has no power to restrain the acts of succeeding assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this Act to be irrevocable would be of no effect in law; yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any Act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or to narrow its operation, such Act will be an infringement of natural right."

Chapter 12 The Word According To Pat

Finally, I would like to offer a few quotes from public statements made by Pat Robertson, which should give us all cause for serious reflection.

Here is Robertson's view on religious tolerance, delivered on The 700 Club on January 14, 1991:

"You say, 'You're supposed to be nice to the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians and the Methodists and this, that and the other thing.' Nonsense! I don't have to be nice to the spirit of the Anti-Christ! I can love the people who hold false opinions, but I don't have to be nice to them."

Robertson has some strong views about women and their role in the scheme of things. First, from a fundraising letter sent out in the summer of 1992:

"The feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians."

And on The 700 Club, January 8, 1982:

"I know this is painful for the ladies to hear, but if you get married you have accepted the headship of a man, your husband. Christ is head of the household, and the husband's the head of the wife and that's just the way it is. This is the way the Bible sets it up."

The Reverend is equally clear-eyed when he talks about the Constitution, as reported in the Washington Post on March 23, 1981:

"The Constitution of the United States is a marvelous document for self-government by Christian people. But the minute you turn the document into the hands of non-Christian people and atheistic people, they can use it to destroy the very foundation of our society. And that's what's been happening."

And, just in case anybody hasn't caught his drift yet, here are the words of Pat Robertson himself from 'America At A Crossroads', a video produced in 1990 by the Christian Coalition:

"I believe the Christian Coalition will be the most powerful political force in America by the end of the decade."

As I said at the beginning of this book, the enemy is all around us. Their goal is to take control of our country, to have power over us all, and they will use any means available. They will do it illegally, covertly, immorally, recklessly, unconstitutionally, and by intimidation and violence. The leaders of the Christian Coalition believe in oppression and religious terrorism.

In response, I would offer these words, written in 1814 by Francis Scott Key:

Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.
Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

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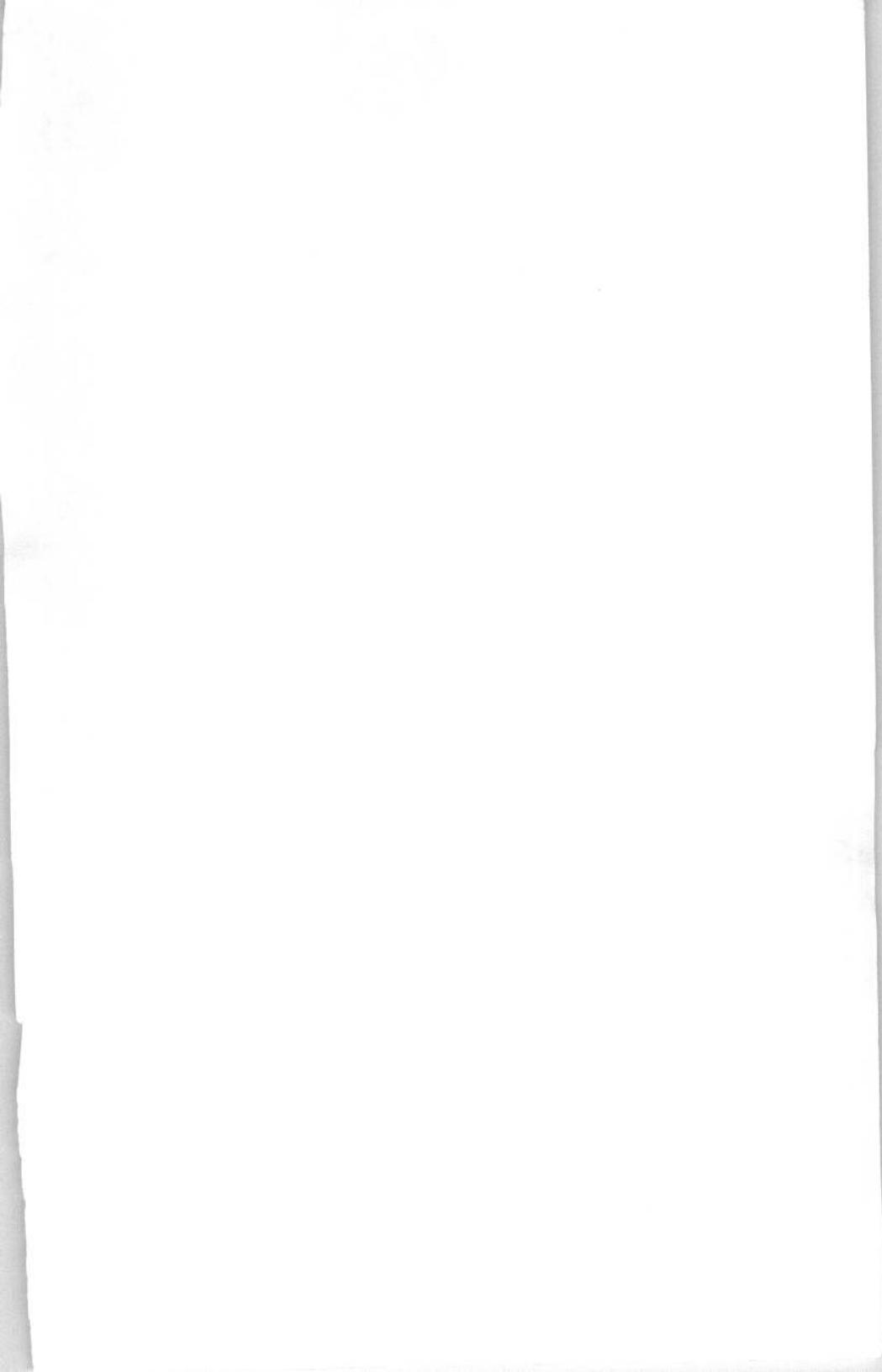
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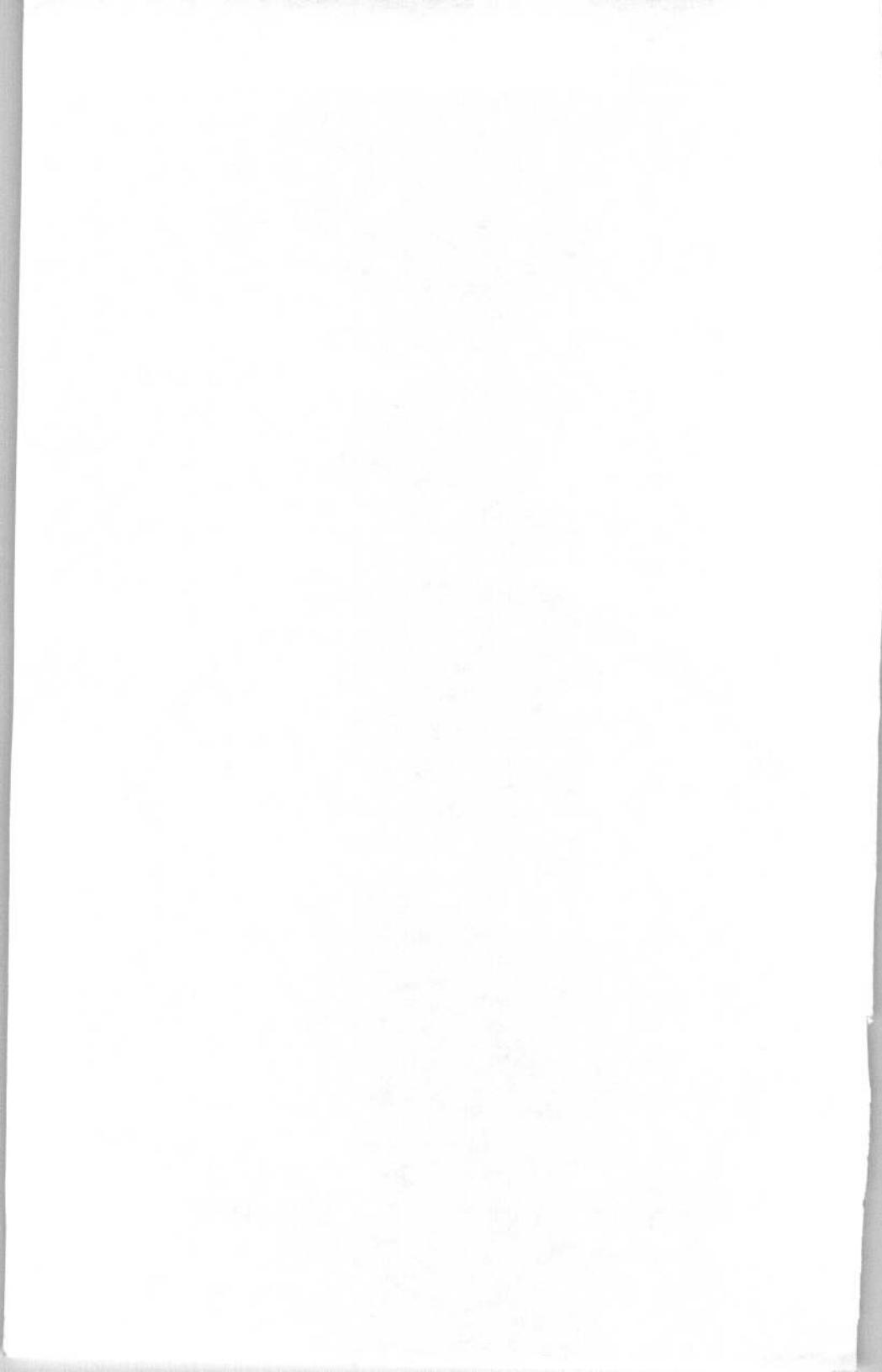
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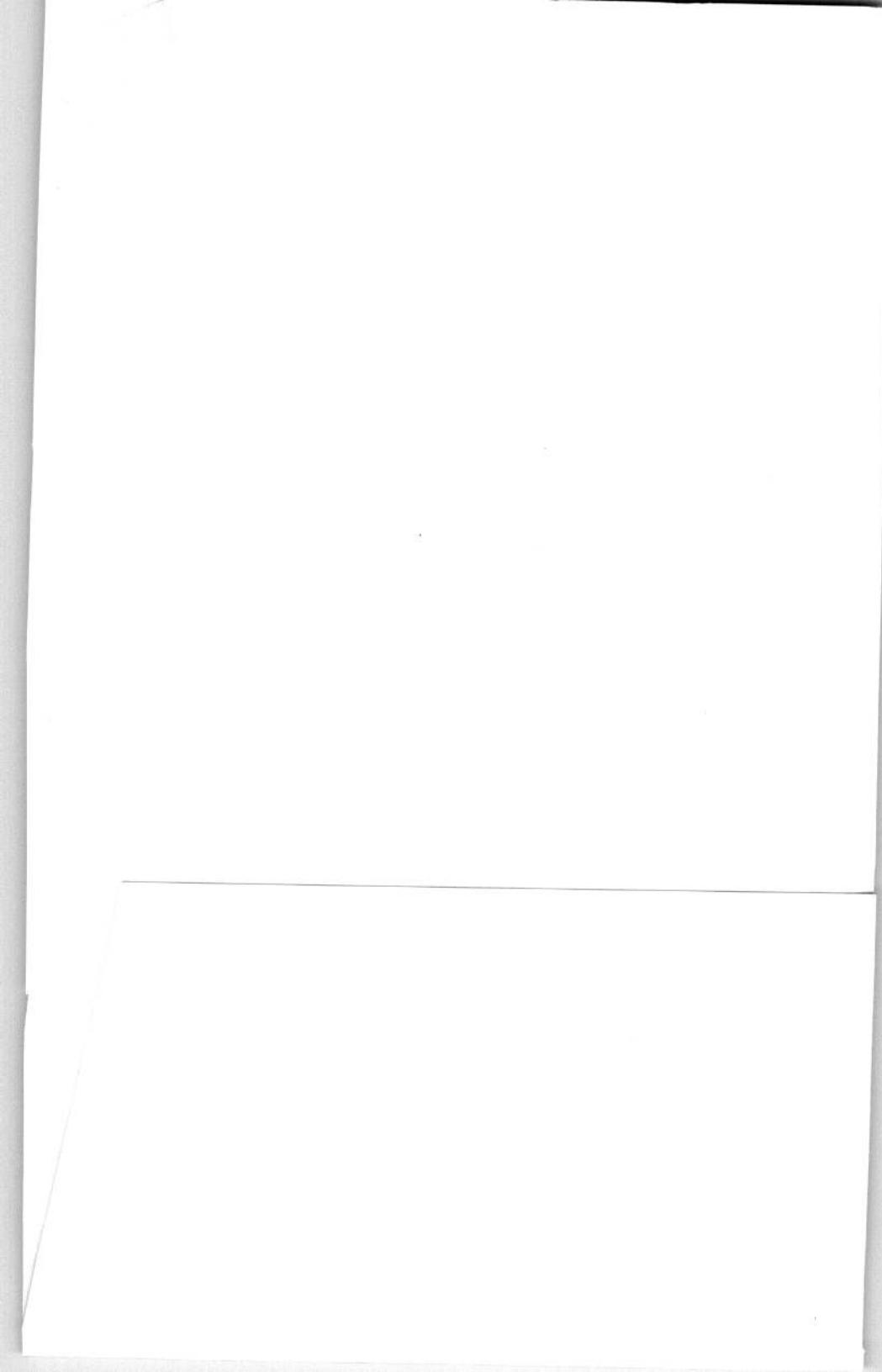
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